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534.

# MARIAN;

OR,

# A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

By Mrs. S. C. HALL.

AUTHORESS OF "LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF IRISH LIFE,"
"UNCLE HORACE," &c. &c.

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"Did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?"—Milton.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.


## CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE FOUNDLING . . . . . 1

## CHAPTER II.

THE INFANCY OF THE FOUNDLING . . . . . 31

## CHAPTER III.

A HINT OF THE FUTURE . . . . . 46

## CHAPTER IV.

A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY . . . . . 58

## CHAPTER V.

A NAME FOR THE CHILD . . . . . 65

## CHAPTER VI.

THE "BLUE" PARTY . . . . . 85

## CHAPTER VII.

FIRST LESSONS IN LIFE . . . . . 138

CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE

MARIAN'S EARLIER TROUBLES . . . . . 160

## CHAPTER IX.

MARIAN'S DEPARTURE FROM HER FIRST "HOME". 191

## CHAPTER X.

MARIAN AT SCHOOL . . . . . 203

## CHAPTER XI.

MARIAN'S NEW TRIALS . . . . . 225

## CHAPTER XII.

WOOING A WIDOW . . . . . 246

## CHAPTER XIII.

SCHOOL MORTIFICATIONS . . . . . 287

## To Mrs. FIELDING.

My dearest Mother,

I dedicate this work to you, because I feel it to be, of all I have yet written, the most worthy your acceptance; and because public confidence in the productions of my pen demands from me a grateful acknowledgment of the source from whence I derived that which I humbly trust I may describe as a continual, an earnest, and a fervent desire to aid in advancing the cause of Virtue while labouring to promote enjoyment.

Your grateful, dutiful.
And affectionate daughter,
Anna Maria Hall.

*The Rosery, Old Brompton.*
*Nov.*, 1839.

# MARIAN;

OR,

## A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE FOUNDLING.

In the year 1816, on one of those damp, dull, misty mornings, so peculiar to our English climate and the month of November, and just as the sleepy watchman had called "Past five o'clock," my story commences.

Along the line of Sloane Street a woman was pacing somewhat rapidly, her figure enveloped in a scanty grey cloak which reached only to her knees, and her face was shaded by a black silk bonnet. Having passed Cadogan Place, her pattens clicking at every step, and marking the speed at which she travelled, she encountered the drowsy proclaimer of the hour,

who was at the moment watching with anxiety for the first streak of light that might serve as authority for leaving his chill and wearisome "beat."

"Can you tell me," she inquired, "if there's a light in the airy of No.——I forget the number, but where the parrots are always hung out?"

"I believe there is, but I'm not sartin, on account of a raison I have," replied the old man, who had been long and well known in the neighbourhood by the *soubriquet* of "Paddy Charley"—the first title being an allusion to his country, the second to his occupation. "Where the parrots do be," he continued, "my wife's brother's cousin, Katty Macane, is at this present time (as may-be you know) stopping, as cook; and, whin she starts as airley as this, she ever and always strikes a light—for a raison she has, a-cushla! as well as myself, which is, that she could'nt see widout it."

"Then, I suppose," said the English washerwoman (for the woman was nothing more), "I shall be able to find it."

"No doubt," replied Paddy—leaning against a post, and crossing his feet—"unless you happen upon a small mistake, and see one light instead of another. There's enough of new lights, and false lights, hung out, asthore! in every street in London, to mislade brighter eyes nor yours—not that I've anything to say agin their brightness, honest woman; only, as ye'r on the road to Katty Macane, and, as I said afore, though she's no blood relation, yet she's almost as good (och, bother! the same, I mane), I'll just walk back wid ye to the house, t'other end of this sthreel of a sthreet, that's had more watching to-night than comes to its share; for I purraded it two hours, explainin' the natur of judge and jury to a boy I know, one Phil Maguire—poor ignorant craythur, he's new to the world, though gettin' on in years, the only thing he ever got on in yet. So, my good woman, we'll dance the hays back to Katty."

Paddy Charley slung his lantern on the end of his stick, and, resting the stick on his shoulder, walked towards the Knightsbridge end of

Sloane Street with the laundress, who maintained a profound silence; pondering, perhaps, upon the Irishman's idea of equalising his watchfulness, or wondering how he could term a man advanced in years "a boy," or puzzling her brain as to the probable or possible analogy there could be between "she's almost as good," and "the same," and conning "the English" for "dancing the hays." As they passed the turn leading to that most quiet of all quiet places, "Hans Place," Paddy inquired of the silent companion who pattered along by his side, "If she ever did a hand's turn down there?" She demanded what he meant; but, with only an inward exclamation at her stupidity, he continued —"It's the loneliest place of a place, in an inhabited city, you ever see. The blackbirds and thrushes, and sich-like innocent shy birds, walks fair and asy round and round it, widout givin' themselves the laste trouble in life about flyin'. I was on the *bate* of it myself for six months; and, faix! I was a'most kilt entirely through the dullness. So I petitioned the boord to be removed. 'Why?' sis the

boord—for boords of all kinds are desperate stupid. 'On account of my precious life, yer honours,' sis I, quite polite; 'and the wife and five darlint children that 'll soon be fatherless if I stop on it.' 'Are you afeerd of being murdered?' sis the boord, quite innocent. 'Och, no, y'er honours,' makes answer myself; 'sure there'd be something stirring, something to keep a man alive, in that. t's on account of the quietness, gentlemen,' sis I; 'and there bein' nothin' but stilness in it, and stupidity,' sis I. 'Even the cats are all fine responsible study cats, that keeps reg'lar hours, and shuns the moonlight; and the truth is, my lords,' sis I, 'the life's soddened in me, so it is. Not so much as a white mouse or a hurdy-gurdy allowed to creep round it; and I'll quit the profession intirely,' sis I, 'barrin' I'm removed. For what's life widout sport, gintlemen?' sis I, risin' the stick over my head into a caper, and cutting a flourish, to show the power o' my elbow; 'and thin'—but here's the house, and the light too, honest, *quiet* woman—and there's Katty

Macane herself, blowin' the life out of her at that baste of a fire—and, be this and be that, there's a long, green, comfortable-looking bottle on the table at her side. Och, murder! why the arr'ee gate is open. Well, Katty! Katty! if the misthress knew that, it's yerself that u'd be afther gettin' it, I'm thinkin'."

The washerwoman wished Paddy Charley good morning, while he, with the native politeness of his country, opened the area-gate, for her descent; but she had hardly taken two steps, when her foot encountered some obstruction. Fortunately she was, as it were, "feeling her way," so that she did not tread heavily upon it; yet she awoke by the pressure a little deserted infant, who cried loudly.

"Holy Mother!" ejaculated the watchman. "What's that?"

"Oh, my good gracious me! it's a *kinfant!*" replied the washerwoman.

"Devil fetch ye!" exclaimed Katty Macane, opening the kitchen door; "it's a weary sight the whole of ye are, and a weary hearing, bobberying up there like a flight o' crows, as

noisy, and as unlucky. You'll wake the mistress—to say nothing of the parrots! Heaven save us! Mrs. Gandy, ma'am, can't ye come down? What ails ye, intirely? What's come over ye? Paddy, honey! is it bewitched the woman ye have?—tho', God knows, the days of bewitchment are over with you, as well as meself."

"Not I, faix!" replied the night guardian; "but don't you hear?"

"Hear what, Paddy?—Is it them murderin' cats?"

"What an innocent you are! Come up, Misthress Macane, and fetch a light; my lantern's as good as out—small odds! when it's in, it's like Paddy Doolan's songs, widout any fire."

Katty re-appeared, bearing in one hand a brass candlestick, in which was a crooked candle, and with the other shading it from the damp and wind.

The first sharp cry of the infant had sunk into a wail so low and mournful that it sounded like the last sob of a departing spirit; and

the Irish cook, having given the light to the watchman to hold, proceeded to take the child from its perilous situation.

"Don't touch it, Mrs. Macane, don't touch it," repeated the laundress; "I can step over it without harming it; but don't you touch it. If you do, I *have* heard the parish can make you keep it. Think of that! Take your hands off it, and let this honest man carry it, as is his duty, to the workhouse."

"The devil fetch you and the workhouse together, Mrs. Gandy!—Is *that* what ye'r afther? or did God never give you a child of your own, to tache you the feelings of nature? Och, my grief! see that now! How a born Christian woman should have so little understanding of the heart in her bosom! Arrah, woman! *is* there a *heart* in ye, at all at all? A lannah machree! was ye, jewel!" The latter sentence was addressed to the crying infant, whom she had folded in her arms, and to whom she continued talking, as she entered the kitchen, closely followed by the woman and Paddy Charley.

"A lannah machree! was ye, jewel! and whisht, will ye, a-cushla! Asy, my bird! for it's wake the mistress ye will, ye poor little dissolute crature. Whisht, will ye? Mrs. Gandy, stir yerself, woman, and put that sup o' milk that's in the crame-jug into the butter-saucepan—put it all in, will ye?"

"We'll have none left for our tea," said the laundress.

"Is it *tee* ye'r thinking of?" said Katty, mimicking the English accent; "and this weeny crature starving with cowld and hunger; and the immortal sowl that's in it bothering the life out of it, not knowing exactly whether it's stay or go it will! Paddy, man alive! take the butter-saucepan out of her hands, and make the child a little food."

Mrs. Gandy relinquished the butter-saucepan, not without again lamenting the loss of the milk, and assuring the cook that the workhouse was provided for "such-like hobjects;" that she had paid rates and taxes, and had no right to support or take trouble about "such-like;" and that she knew places where ser-

vants would be turned away for such conduct; and that, though it was no affair of hers, still she thought that she (Mrs. Macane) ought not to throw away her place. No, she wouldn't look at such a dirty brat—not she.

"It's not dirty! poor lamb!" said the cook. "It's a month or five weeks old, at the least; and see what beautiful lace there is to its cap! Whisht! poor lone crature! don't wake the parrots, *a vourneen!* Faix! Paddy, ye'r doing that beautiful. I'll go bail it's many a panakin ye make for yer own grawls."

"I'll not deny it," said the watchman; "particular whin the woman do lie ill, or be out; and it's fond the poor things are to get their daddy to do a hand's turn for them. I'm not as good a father as I ought to be, on account of the dhrop; yet it's long afore I could desart my own flesh and blood—the Holy Mother look down upon it! But it's a fine babby, fat and white. God bless it! it laps down the milk like a kitten."

"Oh, then," ejaculated Katty, "the Almighty knows best! but sure I am, if the

mother of this sweet babby be in life, she must have a sad mind this blessed morning. The nature and the shame had a long struggle, I'm thinkin', before she parted it. Oh, what would my master and mistress give for such as this to be their own!"

"Katty, honey," said the watchman, after having filled a cracked tea-cup with some species of spirit from the green bottle, "maybe I'd better take that little grawleen to the place she spoke of, after all; for your mistress might take the flounders at it, and, seeing she's a fanciful lady, turn you off, and make a complaint that I wasn't as sharp on the watch as I might be."

"Mind ye'r own business, the both of ye, that's what I wish ye would," responded Mrs. Macane. "Don't I know the mistress is fanciful? And isn't *that* my hope for the poor infant, at present, any way?—Bless it's little heart! but it has beautiful eyes, as black as sloes. She's turned agin the parrots, and has ordered me to find a situation for the monkey. More be-tokens,

she won't hear to the crame for Ponto's breakfast."

"Crame for a baste's breakfast!" ejaculated the watchman, holding up his hands, "well, the Holy Mother between us and harum! if I ever heard the likes o' that."

"Ah, Paddy, ye'r a cute man, and a knowin', but faix, for all that you might find it no asy matter to fatten a dog on *London crame*," replied the cook. "And more be-tokens than all," she continued, "I heard her tell the doctor she was dying of ennuwee."

"Ennuwee!" repeated Paddy, "that's a new disorder; I niver hard tell of it afore; is it catching?"

"Not it," said the cook; "from all I gather to and fro, I think it's good manners for laziness; and I'll go bail the doctor's of my mind, for he makes answer (he's a mighty fine-spoken man) —'My dear madam,' says he, 'go to the play, and the opera, and amuse yerself,' says he. 'So I would,' says she, 'if I knew how; but I'm tired of my pets. Parrots are noisy, and

monkeys mischevous; my husband stupid, and Ponto cross!'"

"Oh! the heathen!" exclaimed Paddy, "to put her husband among the animals!"

Katty smiled a sort of double smile, one at Paddy, the other on the poor deserted infant, who, unconscious of aught save the comfort of heat and food, had fallen asleep on the Irish-woman's lap.

"I'm not going for to say," she replied, rocking to and fro, "that my master is an animal, the Lord forbid I should! Mr. Cavendish Jones is as good-tempered and generous a gentleman as ever stepped in shoe-leather. And, more be-tokens, my mistress is very fond of him—in rason; still I'm thinkin' that a new pet would be much to her mind. And who knows but God might turn into her heart a thought for this poor innocent deserted babby? who knows it? Sure He can do *what* He plazes, and *whin* He plazes, and *how* He plazes. And afther all comes to all," she added, looking fondly down on the sleeping child, "there's harder things done every day the sun rises

than turning a woman's heart towards a lone infant, when it has none to help it."

"Why thin thrue for ye, Mistress Macane, and more power to ye, I pray God. I believe the women's a'most all alike; for if my Judy catcht a sight o' that child, its for turning it into number nine she'd be, as if eight was'nt enough for a watchman!"

"Sorra a doubt I doubt Judy," replied the cook, "she's of dacent, honest people; clane, spirited, and upright war they every one, giving the bit and the sup to all that axed it, and never moidering their brains, as they do here, wid too much thinking."

"What did you say the masther's name was?" suddenly inquired Paddy, while the cook placed the sleeping child in an arm-chair, her own particular seat, in the comfortable kitchen.

"Mister Cavendish Jones," replied Katty.

"Cavendish Jones," repeated Paddy slowly. "The grandeur is'nt at the right ind, I'm thinkin'; the paycock's tail turned the wrong way. Sorra a Cavendish would think of call-

ing himself Jones; and yet ye see the morsel of a Jones must tuck on a Cavendish, just as if one put three race-horses to draw a wheel-barow. Oh! the vanity o' the world!"

"Mister watchman," said the kind-hearted cook, "I've thrown no reflection upon the people that sends you a howlin' and a shiverin' up and down this street like the ghost of a banshee, and for no mortial use, that I know of, or that darlint could'nt have been put inside our airee without your knowledge. So lave my masther's name alone, if you plase; its as good as Paddy Charley, any day. I hav'nt got into the London fashion of uphoulding myself, and downhoulding my employers. My master and mistress have their own whimsey ways, and so has ivery one else in the wide world; and why not? Ye'll find the soap in the wash-house, and iverything in a scald, Mrs. Gandy; I always heats my coppers the over-night, and thin there's no delay."

"That's a real cambric cap," said the laundress, eying the infant, ere she departed, with the look of a connoisseur, "and well got up.

Why there's a lot of things rolled up in the shawl, Mrs. Macane."

"And they're nothing to you nor me," replied the sturdy Katty, "the mistress is the fittest to look at thim."

"I'm sure I found the child first," said Mrs. Gandy.

"And wanted to find it a public home too, without any expinse," answered the Irishwoman, tying up the shawl and walking with it out of the kitchen.

Mrs. Gandy filled herself out another cup of tea, and, complaining that it was poor trash, strengthened it from the green bottle. The watchman lingered at the area-door.

"Its lucky to find anything on a Monday," said Paddy, "and that's a lucky-looking child."

"Oh!" grumbled the laundress, "I dare say it 'll have more luck than honester ones."

"And yet," continued the moralizing watchman, "the best of luck for a feymale infant is but hard if it has no mother. Ye poor sleepy craythur," he added, looking on the child, "maybe it would be better for ye to have

died of the could air than of the could people ye'll meet with by'n bye; better, maybe, that my foot, or the foot of that asy-going woman, had trampled the little life out of ye for good and all, than that it should swell and rise, and blossom into beauty, and then be crushed by sin and sorrow at the last. Its hard to lay out good for the likes of you; yet the Lord sometimes turns the throuble airley upon one, and sometimes late; there's a set share for ivery man and woman that iver came into the world; if we hav'nt it in one way we have it in another. Yet, bless the babby! there's a smile now upon it's lip, that tells of good luck; poor dowshy thing! how could the mother that owns ye lave ye?"

"True for ye," said the cook, as she re-entered, "and I'm not standing here, if there is'nt good luck afore that infant; two purses out of the fire last night, a ring in the candle, and a soft stranger in three cups of tay running, is'nt for nothing, Paddy Charley."

"Throth, Katty, you war born laughing, not crying," returned the watchman. "It 'll have

its share of the bad and the good. And so, maybe, its outside ye'd be about eight this evening, and tell me the going on of its luck, any way; a cheerful spirit carries further nor goold. And so God be wid all here!" And at last away went Paddy; and long after his exit from the area Mrs. Macane heard him shaking the rails in front of the different houses, by way of convincing the inmates that he was a careful watchman who did his "devoirs" duly.

The laundress had retired to the back kitchen to pursue her task, and ponder upon the strangeness of the Irish character. She wondered why the cook was interested in the foundling; she wondered what the housemaid would say; she wondered what the footman would say; she wondered what the lady would say; and, above all, she wondered what was in the bundle, but, like hundreds of her sex and country, her "wonderings" led to no conclusion; her brain, poor thing! was as steamy as the atmosphere by which she was surrounded.

Katty Macane possessed even more warmth and energy of character than falls to the lot of

the generality of Irishwomen. Unlettered, yet not ignorant, her ideas, if conveyed in good authorized English, would have been considered worth remembering for their quaintness and originality, if not for their justness and propriety. She had looked at the world "fore and aft;" she had married, like most Irish girls, for love, not prudence, and had remained, as (thank God!) so many of her country-women do, true and faithful to a man who was little better than a brute, for no other reason than that he was her husband. She had been with him in the Peninsula, returned with him to England, and buried him, to use her own phrase, "dacent," after watching his sick bed, and enduring his increased ill temper, for many months. He was a soldier; and it was during her wanderings abroad that Katty became acquainted with the mysteries of sundry "made dishes," which entitled her to the rank and reputation of a first-rate cook. Katty moreover was stern and honest; fond of humour, and gifted with a light yet tender heart. She was still in the prime of life; with

a round joyous expression of countenance, and eyes sparkling, either in tears or smiles. Sometimes, it was said they sparkled with more than *natural* spirit, but only, she declared, "whin she had the devil's own dinner and all to dress," and no one with understanding to help her.—What could she do but take a thimblefull, *to keep up her heart?* On such occasions it was her invariable practice to cry after her husband, who, according to her own account, must have been a gigantic monster, "standing six foot three in his stocking-vamps, the pride of the regiment, and so fond of the army, that he'd fight with his own shadow, sooner than get out of practice. Yet," she would add, with characteristic feeling, "*Sure he had the first of my heart's love, and the last of it is in his grave.*"

Poor Katty had frequently been a mother, but none of her children lived; doubtless it was the remembrance of unfulfilled hopes which made her, when the watchman had departed, and the laundress was fairly at her work, take the sleeping infant upon her knees, and

regard it with the deep and silent earnestness that will not bear the noise of words. Long, long did she gaze upon its little undefined features, until at last her own became almost convulsed by the intensity of her feelings; and though she uttered neither murmur nor sound, yet heavy tears rolled down her cheeks and fell upon hands made large and hard by honest industry—then, hearing, as the day advanced, the footsteps of the other servants upon the stairs, she brushed away the traces of woman's tenderness, resumed her hearty smile, replaced the still slumbering child upon its quickly-arranged bed, and communicated to the sleepy housemaid and lazy footman the morning's adventure. The footman agreed with the laundress, that the workhouse was the proper place for "such-like;" and the housemaid, though she pitied the child, rated poor Mrs. Macane as much as she dared, least the capricious lady of the house should take a fancy to the foundling, and add it to her menagerie. This was indeed Katty's brightest hope, and she bore the reproof with far more than her

accustomed patience, in anticipation of the triumph of her plan. Earnestly did she watch for the first tingle of Mrs. Cavendish Jones's bell, having dexterously managed to get Sophy out of the way; for most deeply anxious was she to have "the first word." Combined with her good and generous qualities, were the more keen and shrewd ones which belong especially to the lower order of Irish, who are, or rather *were* in those days, compelled to oppose *force* by cunning,—cunning! the weak man's strength. In accordance with this spurious wisdom, she had removed all species of food from two parrots, a paroquet, and a macaw, and had left open the door of their retreat, so that their dissonant music resounded through the house, making double and treble discord. Mr. Cavendish Jones was in the country, so that, when Katty entered her mistress's room, she felt pleased that she had but *one* person to contend with, or rather, I should say, manage.

"I hope, madam," she murmured, in her most soft and respectful tone, "that those darlint birds hav'nt disturbed yer honour?"

The pale fantastic woman raised her head from its pillow, and assured her cook that she had not been able to sleep for the last two hours.

"See that now!—the ungrateful things! and I afther making them such beautiful 'soppy!' and—hear that now! Oh, tunder and ages! no wonder if yer head was split in two halves with the squall of that blue macaw—to be sure he's a beauty."

"He's no such thing!" exclaimed the mistress, quite out of patience at the increased noise, for Katty had left the bed-room door ajar; "I've borne with them long enough. I am sure the door is not shut."

"Shut, ma'am? ay, as close as confession; but sure the screams of that one would pierce through stone walls."

"How I could be such a fool as to have them at all!" sighed the lady.

"Why, to be sure, ma'am, you must have something to amuse you and keep up yer spirits; and it's proud every one about ye ought to be, to see ye take delight in such-

like. But sure I must say that blue macaw is as noisy in the house—as a child."

The first bolt was shot; and Katty, waiting for its effect, applied herself to light the fire with more than her usual care.

The unlucky macaw gave another squall, which had the effect of a big drum thundering amid a piping and tuneless orchestra; and Mrs. C. Jones exclaimed—

"For heaven's sake, Cook, send it down to the coal-vault! send them every one to the coal-vault—one and all. Child! five hundred children would not, could not, make the noise of these birds. Let them every one be taken to the coal-vault. Your master will be home to dinner, and then he will say where I can send them. Child! I wish to God I had a child! That would be something to look forward to—something to hope from."

Katty was too judicious to say another word, but she tripped down stairs more lightly than could have been expected from twelve stone weight, and the noise of the birds ceased. Quickly did she return to her task, wondering

what she should say next, when her mistress saved her all further trouble by the well-timed question of—

"Cook, do you know anybody who has a child to sell?—I do not mean to sell, exactly—but one to be disposed of. I really think I should like a nice fat little ready-made child, to bring up, you know, Cook, as I pleased."

"See that, now!" ejaculated the overjoyed Katty, her fingers quivering with delight, while she stuck the fire-wood between the bars.

"See what?" inquired her mistress.

"The lucky lady that you are!" she replied.

"How, lucky?" was the rejoinder.

"That everything you wish comes to pass."

"How is that, Cook?"

"Now, stating a case," said Katty, "that some one would give ye up a babby, is it a boy or a girl you'd like to have, Ma'am?"

"Oh, a girl, to be sure; boys always smell of new leather and peg-tops, and their skin turns into corderoy, and they are odious until

they are twenty. There can be no possible interest attached to a boy."

"See that, now! Well, it's yerself that's the lucky lady. Oh, the bright fortune that's on ye! I never, in all my travels, did hear tell of the like—never!"

"I wish, Cook, you would say what you mean."

"Troth! Ma'am, it's just astonished myself is at yer luck. Sure this blessed morning wasn't there left in the arree the very thing yer heart (God bless it!) is afther?

Mrs. Cavendish Jones raised herself on her elbow, and anxiously repeated her inquiry as to what the cook meant.

"Mean, is it?—Why, Ma'am, wasn't a beautiful babby—a famale babby—left in the arree this morning? Such an angel! with black eyes, the very moral of yer own—in shape, I mane, though it's yours is as blue as a chaney saucer. And didn't Mrs. Gandy (the misfortunate woman!) walk over it first, and then send it to the workhouse?"

Mrs. Cavendish Jones sank back on her

pillow, with an exclamation of horror: it was some moments ere she could speak distinctly, and endeavour to make her superintendent of confections understand she must be more explicit. Mrs. Jones, be it known to my readers, was very fond of using hard words; and so she commanded Katty twice to "elucidate" before Katty replied: be it also known that this did not proceed from stupidity on Katty's part, but from a very wise desire to excite her lady's curiosity to the uttermost before its gratification.

"Why, Ma'am, a beautiful infant was left by some one in our arree, and Mrs. Gandy (that's the washerwoman), came for the three-weeks' wash—(we're forced to turn the month into three wecks, on account of the blacks and the short days, my lady)—walked over the innocent, and then condemned it to the workhouse.

"Merciful Heaven!" ejaculated the lady; "then she extirminated the unoffending innocent. Cruel Cook, to call me fortunate!—The monster! I would have resigned principalities and powers to preserve its existence!"

"The Lord love yer kind heart, Madam! but she didn't do it a taste of harm in regard of the walking, because the watchman stopt her. 'Would you have the blood of the innocent on yer head, woman?' says he, spaking up like a man; and then I made my way with one of them blinding tens of small candles (troth! Ma'am, the eights are cheaper, for the tens run to the bad intirely—no stamina in them at all, as the doctor said to my poor Mike when he was dying; that was the word, stamina, and I mind it ever since). Well, I saw the child—like a lock of wool, so soft and innocent—wrapt up in beautiful lace, and the eyes in its head shining like two morning stars. 'Take it to the workhouse,' says Mrs. Gandy."

"Cook," interrupted the lady, "I desire you never to employ that horrid unprincipled person again; and I am very angry with you for permitting the child to be removed without my knowledge. You ought to have known me better. The few amusements the intense delicacy of my health permits me to partake of, render it essential to my existence

that I have variety; and the only reparation in your power is to go instantaneously to the refuge for the destitute, commonly called a workhouse, and demand that the innocent and unoffending creation be delivered to you, that I may immediately attend to its moral and religious education."

"Oh, I'll go to the workhouse directly," said the triumphant Katty, both amused and delighted by her lady's speech, "though it's a place I never was nor never will be in, plase God! for every workhouse is built at the back of the world—nobody ever finds it out—till they can't help it; but I don't see the necessity —begging your pardon, Ma'am—seeing the babby is in the kitchen at this present moment, as snug as a periwinkle in its shell."

"How could you be so stupid, Cook? You told me that horrid woman sent it to the workhouse with the watchman."

"Ah, Ma'am! I *said* she wanted to do so—it's the stupid way I have of spaking; every one hasn't the gift of the beautiful unknown language your honour uses. It's yer will and

pleasure, then, that the babby stops in the kitchen till you get up, Ma'am ?"

"It's my will and pleasure that you bring the dear infant here directly, and send Benjamin out for some tops and bottoms, and arrow-root, and medicine, and petticoats, and—everything. There, Cook, do not delay another moment."

"Ah! I said you war a fortunate lady, to have your wishes beforehand—before, I may say, you knew them yourself. And now about poor Ponto's tail, Ma'am."

"Mrs. Macane," exclaimed the lady, "you will drive me distracted! What do I care about Ponto's tail? Do as I have desired."

"Success!" murmured Katty, as she closed the door; "it's all up with the parrots and Ponto for the present, God be praised!—It mayn't last long, to be sure, but he's wisest who makes hay while the sun shines."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE INFANCY OF THE FOUNDLING.

"You think it healthy, dear Doctor?"

"Exceedingly so; a perfect and beautiful child."

"Open its eyes, Nurse, that the Doctor may see how black they are."

"It's fast asleep, Ma'am," said Katty, whom the events of the last four-and-twenty hours had converted from a cook into a nurse, to the no small astonishment and mortification of her fellow-servants.

"Thank you, my dear Madam," replied the polite Medico, but the faculty can judge of the colour of the eye through the lid which covers it; look, you perceive the particular tone—there—that—*that* indicates a black eye."

"But I like to see it open and shut its eyes," said the lady, half pouting; "it does it so naturally."

"Children generally do," replied Doctor Darling, drily.

"Open its eyes, Nurse," repeated Mrs. Cavendish Jones, in a peremptory tone.

"It's a sin a'most to wake it," interceded Katty.

"Do as you are desired, Nurse," said the lady. The nurse gently drew up the lid, but it was quickly closed again.

"I am afraid it is stupid," sighed the lady, turning to her medical mentor. "Where's the use of keeping it to amuse me, if it is stupid?"

"I assure you, my dear Mrs. Jones, it will be a particularly intelligent child. Only have a little patience: wait till it begins to prattle; then indeed you will be delighted," said the Doctor.

"Oh, so I shall!" exclaimed the lady, catching at a novelty with as much avidity as a chameleon at a midge; "but I hope it will never be as noisy or as troublesome as the macaw or the monkey. Can you not get it to talk sooner han usual? What dear little hands it has—so

soft and fat, and little pink tops to its fingers. I have explained to Mr. Cavendish Jones my educational system: it will be a delightful task to educate that sweet child myself. I shall immediately commence learning Latin, the ground work of all languages. I am firmly convinced that the only superiority you gentlemen possess over us arises from your knowledge of Latin, Greek, and such-like."

"My dear lady," observed the Doctor, with one of his sweetest smiles, "you ought not to grudge us the little advantage we derive from the dead languages, when you ladies excel so much in the living."

Mrs. Jones looked as all women, both silly and wise, do at a compliment—much pleased, and then gravely asked the Doctor when he thought she might begin to educate the "dear infant," for she had fully resolved it should be a prodigy.

Mrs. C. Jones was an essentially vain and selfish woman; anxious, painfully anxious, about the well-doing and success of whatever belonged to herself; because it did belong to

herself, and because her pleasure and her vanity arose from being remarkable, or, as she called it, *unique*. The doctor smiled; but all his smiles were so perfectly well-bred as to be quite destitute of meaning; and, his smile having subsided into a simper, he replied —"As Mrs. Cavendish Jones has decided upon its being brought up by hand, all that remains is to give it sufficient food of an unmixed quality; to let it sleep by itself (a direction which annoyed Katty); and, above all, to keep it clean, and accustom it to lively exercise; a child must be kept clean, or it cannot thrive; and do not place it too close to the fire, or suffer its eyes to be exposed to much light, Nurse; leave its little limbs free, and keep it moderately warm."

"I'll manage it beautifully, Sir," said Katty. "Is it in cowld spring wather I'm to duck it every mornin', or to get the chill off? In Ireland the cowlder the better, but English skin is more delicate, may-be."

"I told you I would only have it sponged delicately with rose-water, Nurse," observed Mrs.

Cavendish Jones, consequentially. Old maids and childless wives are always consequential in their directions regarding the management of children, simply because assumed knowledge never has the ease or gracefulness of veritable information. "Lift it up, Nurse, that I may kiss it," continued the lady; "never mind if it does waken; I must teach it always to waken in a good temper." The poor infant was raised up (notwithstanding a remonstrance from the doctor)—was kissed—awoke—and cried—and then Mrs. Cavendish Jones quitted the nursery, declaring she was glad to see the little angel had a spirit of its own, as it would give her much delightful occupation to curb it."

"Why, then, the devil may curb ye, ye poor moonfaced lady!" said Katty, when the door was shut; "and though I'll stand up while there's a breath in my body for ye to strangers—because I can't bear to hear the gentry run down—yet its asy to see with one eye—let alone two—that it's a hard card I'll have to play wid ye so as to keep a healthy life in this poor babby. And, but for the sake of yer poor self, it's happier

a deal I'd be, to be in my native illiment as cook, than stewed up grand here as nurse. A blessing on ye, my jewel, to see how soon tears stand on yer lashes! Sponge ye delicately!" she said contemptuously, after a pause—"what's wather plenty for, I wonder—but to drink and to wash in?—faix darlint, ye may sleep asy. I'll just listen patiently to all I hear, and say 'black is the white of my eye,' if it plases them: but lave Katty Macane alone for having her own way, all the time bothering with doctors and stuff, and that poor lady with her whims, and her airs, thinking she knows better than me, who has been half as long again as her in the world, and has travelled for larning (the only thing I ever got by it); and has eyes to see, and ears to hear. So never fear a-Lannan! Katty 'll have her own way, and make a woman of ye yet; though it's all her wits it 'll take to keep Madam amused: first she'll like ye for the novelty, and after she 'll be ashamed to change, and shame often dresses up as a virtue; but sure there 'll be a morcel of Nature in the bottom of her heart to keep her yer

friend—God save us! Ah! there's the seed of it in us all, though sometimes it's but small fruit it bears. Sleep on, my sweet bird, and it's clever ye are at the sleep any way; no wonder ye'r so fat!"

It was lucky for the still nameless infant that Katty was a woman of shrewd sense and much feeling, for she persevered in her intention of managing the baby her own way: the child throve astonishingly; and its nurse permitted her mistress to think that her judicious advice caused it to do so. It grew daily in beauty and strength; and, in a few weeks, became one of a class that may be called "show children"—such a one as people are compelled to hold "to feel how heavy it is," and to look at, to eulogise its beauty. Mrs. Cavendish Jones was not a woman to continue long pleased with anything, or any subject; but some praised her humanity, others her discernment; others expatiated on her loveliness, and said "how sweet" she would look in a picture, with that lucky infant on her knee. One person (a poor relation, by the

way) was imprudent enough to hint, in pretty broad terms, that Mrs. Cavendish Jones was, of course, the best judge, but that he imagined it was rather dangerous to admit "that sort of child" into the house, not knowing exactly "what it might be or bring." This opinion, of course, worked Mrs. Jones into what she termed a fit of virtuous indignation, and afforded her a convenient and fitting opportunity to quarrel with the poor relation. Indeed, so greatly was she roused that, two hours after she had been "so excited," as she called it, she bought the little stranger three splendid robes and three magnificent caps, and also (to Katty's joy) declared her intention of having a grand christening the following week. Then, indeed, did Mrs. Macane perceive a "divided duty." Her affections keeping her with the little fêted child; while her old habits drew her towards that kitchen where all her glory had been achieved.

Katty's system was to pronounce everything that came from a confectioner's "rank pisin;" and she had succeeded in impressing herself

with the belief that it actually was the case. Her own confectionery was exquisite, both as to quality and appearance; and Mr. Cavendish Jones had reason to lament more than once on "company days" his cook's abandonment of the kitchen. This was another source of gratification to his wife; not but that she really liked her husband to be pleased, when his being so did not particularly interfere with any little cherished plan or feeling of her own; but, in this instance, it afforded her, day by day, an opportunity of recounting her own charity, or rather of introducing the subject, to be commented upon. She "really lamented that dear Mr. Cavendish Jones should have his comforts disturbed; but really there was no other person in the house fitted to undertake the charge of the poor, innocent, unprotected, distressed, interesting creation" (she always called it a creation) "that Providence had thrown in her way. To be sure, it *was* a privation, but her dear husband was *so* amiable; and then we all ought to sacrifice to our duties." And she would cast down her very pale-blue eyes over

her very pale cheeks, and sigh at the prospect of a flat *soufflé*, then a novelty at English tables.

"My dear Mrs. Cavendish"—her intimates left out the Jones in their familiar converse—"My dear Mrs. Cavendish, I always quote you, and say, it is not her accomplishments—it is not her learning, I attempt to praise, but her sensibility."

"True, true," was the observation, in reply, of a plethoric-looking gentleman, purple from "wine and venison;" "but, I must confess, when I call to mind the soups—the venison—such fat!—ah! the haunch—*the* haunch of haunches of last season!—done!—ah, that *was* indeed the glory of park and cookery!—I must say that you have performed an unparalleled—I may with truth call it an *unparalleled* —sacrifice, in transforming such a cook into a nurse."

"But, my dear Sir," said Mrs. Cavendish Jones, with an extra sentimental turn of her head and casting down of her pale eyes, "you forget the fresh accumulation of duties heaped

upon me by the introduction of this 'creation' into our family."

"O no, Madam, no!" he answered with more bitterness than politeness, "the haunch which has just departed did not permit me to forget that."

Mrs. Cavendish Jones sighed a sigh that might have raised the soufflé; and, giving a supplicating look to one of those dinner-eating annuitants, who form a conspicuous unit in all classes of society, and are invariably termed "dear," "sweet," "kind," or "intimate" "friends," as the case may be, seemed to expect another comment upon her sensibility. Alas! how ravenous is unrestrained self-love!

The lady, who heard the sigh and saw the look, and whose complimentary observation we have already recorded, was known in those days to the inhabitants of Sloane Street and its vicinity as Miss Arabella Womble, and had the good or ill fortune to superintend the shooting ideas of ten or twelve "creations," at what she called her "Domestic and Instructive Seminary," in

the "Royal Road," or, as it was and is vulgarly called to this day, the "King's Road." Miss Arabella was one of a class, I hope nearly extinct, who considered hard dumplings and birch rods necessary for the health of her pupils' bodies—Goldsmith's History of England, and the "Speaker," sufficient for the instruction of their minds—and as to their souls, why, they said the Church Catechism twice a-week, and always learnt so many verses of the New Testament—*when they were naughty!* Miss Womble wore her own grey hair, and eyes to match—sharp, keen, bitter eyes they were, with a slight tinge of green running playfully round the retina: they were vigilant as well as prying, and had, moreover, an obliquity of vision, for which they were not to be blamed, because they could not help it. As to the rest of her features—but it is distasteful to describe positive ugliness, which never exists with a benevolent mind—expression, as every painter knows, is the mystery of beauty: suffice it then to say, that her features were in admirable keeping with her eyes, and

that her figure was long, lean, and narrow. She already foresaw the time when "her captivating friend" would become tired of the human toy, and transfer it to her tender mercies; and she responded to her appealing look by an eulogium on her virtues, not in the abstract, but on the whole—observing, somewhat professionally, that she disliked "abridging and abridgments."

Were I to be asked how it was that Miss Arabella Womble was so universally admitted into very respectable society, I should be at a loss to reply. There was nothing winning about her: she was a hard, stiff maiden of about fifty, cursed with a harsh, untunable voice, which was most frequently employed, like the Newgate Calendar, in perpetuating the faults and follies of poor human nature. If she had a genius for anything, it was for scandal; and the worst of it was, she made her scandal "lie like truth." She had a singular and eel-like way of getting out of scrapes; but then, to be sure, her father had been an attorney, and a species of cleverness ran in the

family. She was also gifted with a quickness of perception that enabled her to see, with one glance of her little, keen eye, the foibles of her acquaintances; and, like the insect which fixes upon the injured and, consequently, weakest part to effect its purpose, she fixed upon a foible, and so worked her way. It was sad to think that such a woman should have been suffered to undertake the task of instruction; and yet, with the aid of a French teacher (then a rarity), and one or two good masters, her establishment had gained and kept a reputation for turning out "singularly well-bred girls." Two or three and twenty years have made a great change in the system of female education: I can only say that, brought up with and by people very much older than myself—guarded by those dear ones who charged themselves with the task of educating me in what they called a superior manner, and who were incessant in the labour—still, when I look back at the difficulties I encountered in the attainment of a trifling stock of knowledge, and still more trifling stock of accomplishments, and when I

see the facilities afforded to the young now-a-days, I feel inclined, not to wonder so much at what is called "the march of intellect," as to marvel that the stock of real useful information, particularly amongst our young women, is so limited. Knowing the name of a science does not indicate an acquaintance with that science; and I confess to have been more frequently disgusted by flippancy than astonished by soundness. If much knowledge be really necessary for a woman, let her labour to attain it; yet never educate a girl to pass her life in masquerade. But more of this, when the little foundling has other music to attend to than that of her coral bells, and is required to make, like most young ladies, a great deal of a very little; or, as Mrs. Macane would express it, "Great cry and little wool."

## CHAPTER III.

### A HINT OF THE FUTURE.

It was yet too soon even for Mrs. Cavendish Jones to alter her humour; she was lauded to the top of her bent, and the changes rung on her humanity were pleasant even to the ears of Katty, whose fears that it would not last were murmured to herself a hundred times in the twenty-four hours; always followed by the more loudly and fervently expressed prayer, "Pray God it may!"

The morning before the long-talked-of christening Katty was promenading her infant charge round and round the pretty inclosure which divides Sloane Street from Cadogan Place; and when at what she called the far corner, who should she see outside the rails but our old acquaintance, Paddy Charley!

"Oh thin, Mrs. Macane, Ma'am, is it yerself I've the pleasure to see?" enquired the watchman.

"The same, Paddy, and no other: and how's the woman that owns ye, and all belonging to ye? Sure it does my ould heart good to hear ye chanting the hour like a nightingale; only I never can get spaking to ye by day or night."

"So I understand, Ma'am," replied Paddy, "ye'r at the quality end of the house now, and mighty well it becomes ye. Sonsy and well ye'r looking, sure enough, and I wish I was single for your sake."

Katty Macane looked angry for a moment at this Irish compliment, but her anger was short-lived, and with a lowered voice and a saddened look she answered, "Why, thin, Paddy, if you were twice the man you are, and your skin full o' goold to the back of it, and beautiful as a prince, and wise as a judge —and moreover at liberty—faix it's at liberty you might stay for Katty Macane. I stood the contrariness and thrashing of Serjeant Macane (rest his sowl, I pray God!") (and she crossed herself) "for fifteen years—and, indeed, he put the suffering of thirty into them! And I stood it to the last; but sorra ketch me if

iver I put myself in the way of the like agin, that's all—the men are mighty fine, and well to look at, and all that—but better at a distance, to my thinking, than near; no disrespect to you, Paddy, nor to no man. Och, there's no end to the trouble o' the women! Sure I'm not done paying for the masses for the rest of his sowl yet; he was a hard sinner, Paddy, and the harder the sin the more the money. I'd be sorry to keep him in the purgatory he kept me."

"Ye'r a good Christian, Katty, and always was—a good and forgiving Christian; only, indeed, I think you might have punished him a little longer, just as an example, like, to the rest. But, Mrs. Macane, Ma'am, may I make bould to ax if that bundle—I mean no disrespect—but that fine heap of blue and goose-down, and ostrich-feathers in your arms, is the little grawleen that stiff-crutch of an English woman was near walking over? Well, to be sure! there's nothing passes luck."

"Indeed, and it just is; and if you come close to the rails I'll show you her face—the

blessing o' God on it! There! did you ever set yer eyes on such a beauty before, Paddy?"

"Well, niver!—I niver did, and that's the thruth. Katty, she's mighty like the Princess Charlotte, as I seen her wanct many years ago, smiling jist the same."

"Thank'ye for the compliment, Paddy; I think her handsomer than any princess that iver was born—the blessing o' the world she was!"

The poor woman looked on the child, and her eyes filled with tears.

"Why, it's mighty fond ye are of it intirely, Katty," said the watchman.

"So it is, Paddy, true for ye; mighty fond, as you say. There has been an empty place in my heart for many a long day, and this crature has filled it. I told Judy all about it the only hour I got a run out to my duty, and I'm sure she told you."

"Oh," said Paddy, "for the mather of that, it's been the talk of the whole neighbourhood, who had nothing else to talk of this many a

long day; and it's many a glass of spirits I've got upon the strength of it, as I was the watchman who found the babby first."

"Faith! and Paddy I'll go bail yer story lost nothing by the telling; ye were always a good hand at that, any way."

"Why, then, Mrs. Macane, there 's one story I niver tould to mortial yet, but I'll tell it you, for you have the best right to know; and it's just this:—The morning good fortune sent that poor babby to a home, whin I got up the steps, I see a tall—that is to say, she was raythur tall, not short, you see, but a genteel size of a womankind, about your own hoight—on the other side of the railings, jist forenint where we stand now. Well, she was all gathered up in a cloak, like a horseman's cloak, one of those big heavy cloaks wore by thim murdering Horse Guards, and a big bonnet slouched over her face. Well, the minute I see her, 'Oh, oh, my lady,' sis I to myself, not out, but in my own mind like, 'it's you, is it, that goes a manslaughtering and a child-

dropping about this quiet honest place?' and with that I makes a boult across the street. She sees me, and to be sure she didn't take to her heels. Well, to be sure, may be I didn't take afther her, but she was as fleet as a March wind; and it was while she was running I knew she was a born lady."

"Ah, how thin, Paddy?" inquired Katty, shifting her position so as to protect her charge from the changing breeze.

"By her feet, they war so nate and so nimble, with a way of their own of throtting over the stones as if they war a beautiful carpet; take my word for it, you'll always know a lady by her heels."

"Thrue for ye, Paddy, ye'r a knowledgeable man," replied Mrs. Macane. "Go on."

"Well, then, my dear, I never could have come up wid her, in regard of her swiftness, only she tript, poor thing!—*and I'm thinking that was nothing new to her.*"

In an instant Katty's cheek became of bright dark crimson.

"I tell you what it is, honest man, cast

none of your jibes or reflections upon her, whoever she is; stating a case, that she was the mother of this darlint, there's no proof of *that* sin against her, than what's known to the Almighty; and *He won't tell of it, Paddy.* I'd bet a trifle she's an honest woman, as well as a heart-broken one; and it's ill becoming the sex that leads wake women into sin, to be first to jibe at them afther. I'll not stand it, Master Charley, and that's the short and the long of it."

"I'll not ax you, Mrs. Macane," said Paddy, assuming a respectful air, and resolving, with national cunning, to excite her curiosity, and let it act like oil on the troubled waters: "I'll not ax you; but sure, whin she tript, I saw her face!"

"No!" exclaimed Katty.

"Faith and troth I did, as plain as I see yours; and it was the very moral of the babby!"

"No!" again exclaimed the nurse.

"Fact; the wind tuck her bonnet to the back of her head, and a shower of black curls

blew about her face, and thin whirley, whirley, went the wind, and I had another full view; but she recovered herself before I got up to her; and thin, my dear, she makes a gathering of her bonnet over her eyes, and no sign could I see of them—but they war black! I'd sware to that—so whin she gathered down the bonnet, she gathered up herself, and spanks away as fleet as the wind."

"And you afther her?" inquired Mrs. Macane."

"No!" said Paddy; "I stopt for a rayson I had."

"What was the reason?"

"Why, there wasn't much good in my running the poor thing out of breath, and she was mighty handy intirely with her feet; and——"

"Ye needn't boggle about it," said Katty quickly; "she gave ye something to make ye go asy."

"'Pon the vartue of my oath, she did not,' replied the watchman.

"Don't think to humbug me," retorted the

quick-sighted Katty: "How did yer wife get the bran new coat I saw her in that day; and that gay Barcelona round yer own neck? Watchman's wages never bought them; so, 'pon the vartue of *my* oath, I'll find out the truth of it, or my name's not Katty Macane."

"Well, Mrs. Macane, there's no circumnavigating you—there isn't," said Paddy Charley; "and the truth was, that jist as I cum up wid her, she threw a dawshy little bag of green—no; it was brown, brown silk—on the pavement——"

"And you?" inquired the nurse.

"Why, I had a curosity to see what was in it; and sure enough, while I stopt to pick it up, whir—why she had turned the corner."

"It was a purse," said Katty.

"You might call it so, if you plased, I suppose," replied the equivocating watchman; "it's all a matther of fancy."

"It was heavy enough to stop yer running, any way," observed Katty.

"Oh, asy now, Mrs. Macane; there was but a trifle in it—'pon my soul there

wasn't; and more betokins, if I was put to my oath this minute, to say what was in it, I couldn't tell; for I stopt to take *my morning* at Lord Wellington; and the running, and one thing or other, overkem me so much, that the wife com looking afther me about noon, and woke me out of my comfortable sleep with the hullabaloo she rised; and the only way I had to quiet her, was to give her the purse; and, God forgive her, it was ungrateful enough she was to roar out about the thrifle I had spint upon the dhrop, instead of being grateful for what she got! Oh, those women are cruel, —cruel afther the money!"

Katty considered a moment, and then inquired, "What's gone with the purse?"

"Och, sorra, a know, I know; Judy has it I suppose. What good of an empty purse, and nothin to fill it. Now, Mrs. Macane, you'r an instructable woman, and don't go for to *sell the pass on me.*" *

"Och, bother, man," she interrupted him immediately; "why would I sell the pass on

* Betray me.

ye' and demane myself, turnin' informer?—sure I know better than that. The babe brought luck to you, if not to itself—God bless it!"

"Ah, but Katty, my jewel, what I mean is, don't tell the wife on me. You see she has a way of saying I'm a sieve at a sacret, which I don't like; and if she iver finds out that ye'r come to the knowledge of that through me, the house would grow too hot to hould me; and even the bit of a purse she wouldn't give back to me, out o' spite; and that's God's thruth. Now promise me ye won't tell her."

Oh, indeed," replied Mrs. Macane, "I will not; I'd be long sorry to put contrariness between man and wife."

"And so it's to be christned to-morrow; and I'll go bail ye'll have a power o' company,"

"We will."

"All carrige-people, may-be?"

"A'most all."

"Ah, there's not much to be gathered from the carriage-people: queer set they are. The sixpences and odd shillings go more brisk

the company-nights, whin coaches are to be called from the stand. Any way, I 'll keep about the door, and, plase God it pours down rain, I may have a chance."

" Plase God it 'ill do no such thing as rain, Paddy. Agra ! don't be selfish—it's a grate sin ; and throth, the few shillings ye'd pick up would be nothing to the ill-luck of a wet christning. God be with ye, Paddy ! the strength of the sun is over, and I mustn't keep this darlint out in the chill."

Paddy departed, not quite certain that he had acted wisely in making Katty the confidant of his lucky adventure; but, as he said to himself, " She bothered it out of him."

## CHAPTER IV.

### A VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY.

AFTER parting from Paddy, the Irish nurse returned home, revolving and re-revolving in her mind the best way of obtaining possession of the purse. The child was in a sweet sound sleep; Mrs. Cavendish Jones gone to a party, and having bribed the housemaid to sit by the cot, she tied up two or three of her own articles of clothing, and took her way towards that ugly and stunted termination of a noble street, called Sloane-square.

The York hospital, in those days, stood on the left hand side of it, and Katty paused at the portal to inquire after the health of one or two of her husband's former comrades. She then passed Chelsea-market, and having toiled through some noisome and dirty lanes, resembling rather those of a continental than an English town, she arrived at a discreditable

looking set of houses, known by the name of "Jews' Row." Suddenly she disappeared down an alley, more noisome, more narrow, and more disgusting than any she had, as yet, traversed; and then sought for the dwelling of the old watchman. This was no difficult task, for through a broken window she soon perceived Judy herself, seated by the ashes of a small fire, on a low stool, one end of which was supported by a half-broken flower-pot. The matron was arrayed in that careless *déshabille* so peculiar to Irish women in her station of life, and not particularly easy or pleasing to describe. She was engaged in nursing the eighth hope of the Charley, and a fine bouncing boy he was; strong, joyous, and happy, with not the cleanest face in the world, having been, as his mother informed her visitor, engaged during the evening in "ating the gravel in the lane, and fightin' for the pratey skins wid a little bonneen they had given e'm by a good jontleman." In truth, the young Charley looked an overmatch for the young pig! And Katty could

not avoid admitting, accustomed as she was to the decencies of an English house, that "the Irish, *some of them*, were dirty cratures."

She was obliged to do violence to her feelings, however, and be seated on the supported stool, while Judy established herself on "a bit of a box," and opened the conversation in true Irish style, by asking Katty "what she'd like to take, some tay, or a drop of something warm." Nurse declined the invitation, and told Judy, she had brought her a few bits o' things that might do a turn for the children. Judy was delighted, her eyes and heart both opened; the gifts were examined and commented on in regular rotation, and Judy hesitated not to declare, that "Katty (the heavens above shower down blessings on her!) was the making of them out and out." Katty talked, and chattered, and gossiped, and the more the Irish talk, the more open grow their hearts; Judy warmed amazingly towards her cousin of the twentieth remove!

Under the influence of gratitude, and a small bottle of cordial which Katty had brought in her pocket, she became quite enthusiastic and eloquent in her expressions of gratitude.

"Why, then, indeed, Judy," said the cunning widow, "it's not a few bits of things like them I'd have been thinking of bringing you, only I laid a five-shilling piece upon my *dressing table* (Judy opened her eyes still wider), intending to bring it as a *token* of my good will, *but I've lost my purse; and so, for want of a purse, I forgot it.*" Mrs. Macane shot with a charmed bullet.

"A purse! See that, now!" repeated Judy. "Why, thin, sure I found a beautiful quare purse in the street—sorra a farthing in it, though (Mrs. Macane did not suffer a muscle of her face to move, for she *knew* Judy of old, and was not at all astonished at the falsehood); and it's proud and honoured I'd be if you'd accept it as a token—if I knew where to find it."

Poor Mrs. Macane's heart, which had leaped so high, sank within her.

"Molchee," continued the watchman's wife, addressing the eldest "*hope*" of the family, "Molchee, what's come of the purse ye cried for?"

Molchee, a gleesome, wild-looking, dirty child, took out of her mouth the thumb and finger of her right hand (which an English girl of nine years old would have learnt to employ in a more useful manner), and informed her gracious parent that "Micky had tuck it from her." Micky was soon obliged to present himself,—a white-headed boy, with a brown skin, a ruddy cheek, shoeless, active-looking feet, and a loose large mouth, ready either to laugh or cry. "Micky couldn't tell what had become of it, at all at all, barrin little Biddy had made babby rags of it for her doll." Biddy was asleep in a potato-basket, which, for lack of a cradle, served as the infant Charley's resting-place—when he *did* rest. Biddy, suddenly awoke, began to cry, but the poor child had fallen asleep with the afore-mentioned doll in her arms—a good omen of her future conduct, if our grandmamas' theory be

correct, for they invariably argued that a girl fond of her doll made an affectionate mother. The doll was produced, and Katty's keen eye instantly perceived the purse hanging scarf-fashion round its scarred neck; the poor doll had nearly suffered decapitation, and its features had long been defaced. Mrs. Macane, however, dried Biddy's tears by the promise of a new one, and departed with her prize.

It was not till after she had looked at her sleeping treasure that she prepared to inspect the silken one. Judy tried hard to "get news" out of her; but though, to do Katty justice, I must say she did not delay on her mission, still it was late before she reached her nursery. The purse was of a delicate silk fabric, perfectly French, starred at either end with small steel beads. Above the stars, near the slides, was worked, in smaller-sized beads, the name "Marian," and on the opposite end a sort of crest, which Katty could not make out: she fancied it looked like a cat's head, but, at all events, it exactly corresponded with a similar

mark on a very fine cambric handkerchief, the only thing remaining in her possession of the contents of the mysterious bundle which Mrs. Cavendish Jones had taken under her own especial care.

"Marian, Marian," soliloquised the nurse. "It's a queer name; neither English nor Irish, I'm thinking, but brought from some outlandish furren place. No matter where it came from," she continued, after a pause, "it must stick to her through life!"

## CHAPTER V.

### A NAME FOR THE CHILD.

"It is very extraordinary, my dear," said Mrs. Cavendish Jones to her husband, who it appeared, in this instance, had intruded into his own library—"It is very extraordinary that, when I am disposed to enter into the depths of literature, and devote my time and attention to its 'sweet beauties,' as somebody says, that you never will suffer me to pursue my studies alone. I have been seated here an hour and five minutes exactly, and have been interrupted five times: first, Miss Womble wished to know if I had tried any of the pulverised invisible flour for making cheap puddings, which, some one has told her, would make a light, nourishing diet for workhouses and preparatory schools; I asked Katty about it, and she, in her odd, queer way, said it was 'all bother and blarney:'—by the way, I never

thought to ask her what bother and blarney meant, I was so amused at Miss Womble's annoyance: then Dr. Darling called:—one always *must* see Darling, he has always something so pretty to say; it is like a bottle of lavender sprinkled over the carpet: and then Miss Lawly, to ask my advice about the new trimmings: and then the poor dear man from the Menagerie, to show me the loveliest white rats, with red eyes—red eyes, think of that!—caught in a chapel at Kensington;—such loves! so I told him I had given up all pets but the baby; and he sighed, and said, what would the Menagerie do without Mrs. Cavendish Jones? and, you know, I could only say I could not help it. It is really," added the lady, shaking her flaxen ringlets, "very fatiguing to be a person of consequence—is it not?"

"I really don't know, my dear," replied the worthy man, "because we are not at all acquainted with any persons of consequence, so I can't judge."

"You are very complimentary," said the lady, bridling.

"I am glad you think so, my dear," replied Mr. Jones, who was exactly simple enough to think he might, by chance, have said something worthy his wife's approbation, and yet had a shrewd suspicion he might have said what was wrong.

"I think, my dear, that you are a very worthy, honest, upright, good-natured man," persisted his wife.

"Thank you, my dear," interrupted her husband, seating himself opposite his lady. "That is, a genuine English character; one that, in trade and out of trade, I shall be proud to maintain."

"I wish, Mr. Jones, you would let me finish my sentence, and then you would not be quite so elated; for I would have added, for all that, you were never intended to be the husband of a woman of genius."

"Certainly not, my dear, for I am proud to be your husband."

"Your sneer, Mr. Jones, falls as harmless as one of Cupid's blunted arrows."

"Why, my dear Bess——"

"Now, don't call me Bess, or Betsy; it is so vulgar. Do I look like a Bess?—like a mere useful woman?"

"Certainly not, my dear," replied Mr. Jones, in a tone that was dry enough for sarcasm.

"Well, then, call me Eliza—the gentle Eliza—or Bessy. I never thought Bessy a pretty name until Lady Bab Hesketh sung that lovely little poem of the angel Moore's, 'Fly from the world, oh Bessy, to me!'"

"Which every modest woman ought to cut out of her music-book," grumbled Mr. Jones.

"There you go again, Mr. Jones, bringing up sore subjects. Havn't I expounded to you a million times that Lady Bab is a philosophising woman, who never minds anything but what is great, and goes back to first causes for everything?"

"Would have the water fetched in a pitcher direct from the Thames, my gentle Eliza," said Mr. Jones, laughing, "rather than have it brought in a circumbendibus through pipes; that's it, isn't it? Well, now I've hit it, will you tell me why you have been closeted

here, topsyturvying my books, and keeping Willoughby on the trot to all the circulating libraries in London, so that I cannot so much as get a coat brushed? Tell me, now—there 's a good girl—you look quite lovely this morning; blue always became you."

This compliment converted the impending storm into a sunny shower: the lady shed what gardeners call "a sprinkling shower;" declared that, at times, her "dear Cavendish was a love of a man;" and that he only wanted a little more refinement and sensibility to make him an angel.

"You could acquire this if you pleased, my own dear love," she added, "if you would devote your mind a little to the sweets of literature. Now, I really have been raised to the seventh heaven by a perusal of some of the sweet effusions of our dear novelists;—drawn by a spell through five volumes of the 'Delicate Dilemma;' enchanted by Lady Bab's 'Wild Indian Girl'—quite delightful it is; and making herself the heroine is so pretty, you know; for I found her out at every page

—her odd sayings, and opinions free 'as mountain breezes;' and her philosophy, which I heard a very learned man brute enough to say he could not understand; as if it was necessary for any one to understand the lucubrations of a woman of genius! *She* has promised to come to the christening: I only wish I could get her to deliver a lecture on civil and religious liberty—it would be a happy omen of the dear baby's future happiness."

"Stuff!" muttered Mr. Jones; "don't you think Englishwomen have (the sensible ones, I mean) as much liberty as is necessary? Now, my dear, havn't you enough?"

"Cruel!" murmured Mrs. Jones. "Do you think I have forgotten the grass-green plume and the trip to Windsor?"

"For your own good, my dear; Darling said you were too ill to go."

"Cruel man! But my books; you could not now, I dare say, imagine what has made me so studious of late?"

"I cannot tell."

"Well, then, look at this pile of books."

"I see them."

And well he might. Mrs. Jones had sent for a catalogue to the nearest and best library, and had marked off all such as possessed high-sounding titles. Such heaps of "Delicate Attentions," "Fatal Follies," "Recruiting Officers," "Flitting Fancies," mounting from the carpet to the library-table, had seldom met together, much less been opened or read.

"Well, then, dear, I have been going through these books to see if I can find a fitting series of names for the child of our adoption. I hate common names. Who could sympathise with a Margaret?—a mere Peg! or feel for a Mary?—nothing but Molly! or care even for a Judith, *when* it becomes Judy?"

"I beg your pardon, my dear," interrupted Mr. Jones, "but my aunt Judy was an excellent woman—famous, all round Bartholomew Close, for her plum-puddings; as certain as three o'clock struck on St. Sepulchre's church, so surely was my aunt Judy——"

"Cavendish! Cavendish!" exclaimed the lady, "you 'll be the death of me, you will, with your vulgarity!"

"Well, my love, go on."

"You have disturbed the train of my ideas," sighed Mrs. Jones; "but, however, I will. Now, here is the deliciously romantic story of the 'Wild Irish Girl,' and from *that* I have imbibed the name of Glorvina—that is *first* on my list. Then, sweet Lady Bab has delighted me with Indiana: then, there is something remarkably dulcet in Violante; and, ever since I saw 'Romeo and Juliet,' I vowed, *if* I had a child, it should be a Juliet. Sophonisba is a fine name, but rather too magnificent; and I have certain delicate doubts as to the propriety of calling a girl Venus or Cleopatra, otherwise, *I do* confess, Cleopatra is very much to my taste: then, Alexandrina is a glorious name; and——"

How much longer Mrs. Cavendish Jones might have continued in this strain, we know not, if it had not so happened that Mr. Jones

fell asleep—the most convenient of all possible things to do when it is likely persons will continue too long upon the same subject.

Mrs. Jones felt so exceedingly hurt at this very natural proceeding that, not condescending to disturb her spouse, she arose, in a fit of virtuous and silent indignation, and quitted the apartment. It was some time before the sleeper awoke, and, when he did, to his no small astonishment he perceived the seat his wife had left vacant—although the Clarissas, Sophonisbas, and Glorvinas, were still ringing in his ears, and he could have sworn, as people say whose words in general are not worthy of belief, that he heard her talking at the moment. He was about to close his eyes, in humble gratitude for the reprieve, when Katty Macane's voice, creeping, as it were, through the open door, disturbed his repose.

"If you plase, Master—Mr. Jones, Sir, are you awake?—I beg yer honour's pardon for braking in upon ye, but I'd be glad to know if ye'r awake."

Mr. Cavendish Jones was one of those good-

natured persons who never say "no;" and, consequently, rubbing his eyes, to his great discomfort, he said "Yes;" and Katty Macane, to use her own expression, entered "as if she was treading on thrushes' eggs."

"The Mistress, Sir, is gone out for a drive," she said; "and bid me tell yer Honour she hoped yer sleep would do ye good, Sir."

"Oh, oh," thought Mr. Jones, "there is more gall in that message than in a stormy one."

"And so I was watching the door, Sir, iver since to keep out the noise. I hope ye'r bether, Sir, afther the sleep; it's a mighty comfortable and convanient way of spending the time is sleep, whin, like a gintleman, one has nothing particular to do."

"Very well, thank you, Mrs. Macane; that is," he added, good humouredly enough for a man who had just been awoke, "considering I havn't you to cook for me; very well, considering *that*."

"Yer honor's a gintleman every inch, and I'll be proud to dress yer dinner every day and

hour of my life, letting it, as a body may say, go in with the nursing; but bless you, Sir, the fine cook (this she said with anything but a complimentary emphasis) below would be after going mad at the thought of it, so that would be anything but good for us all, as a body may say; but, Master, dear, that's not what I want to be after saying to you; have ye leisure, Sir, to hear me? The Mistress is gone to take a drive with that grand new lady over the way, may be ye hav'n't time now, Sir, have ye?" To this inquiry Mr. Jones replied, that he *had* time, for he was always ready to enjoy in his own quiet way the raciness of Mrs. Macane's humour; it was to him what a highly seasoned curry would be to an epicure after a plain shoulder of mutton.

Katty advanced, and shutting the door, stood before Mr. Jones in her most respectful attitude, her arms folded on her flounced apron—then dropping a low curtsey she commenced; "Plase your honor, though it is, as a body may say, no business of mine, but a thing turning intirely upon the Mistress's fancy—"

has made up her mind to a string of romantic names."

"Then this will just suit her," said the nurse, in great glee, "for it is a romantical name; and more betokens, I have dreamt of it three nights running."

"Then," exclaimed Mr. Jones, rising from his seat, "there needs no more talk about it; simply tell your mistress you have dreamed three nights running of a name for the baby, and the matter is finished."

Mr. Jones had hardly declared his opinion, when his sposa returned, still indignant at the indifference he had manifested towards her favourite project; but even the most stupid men learn in time to manage, in some small degree, the most capricious women, simply by substituting one caprice for another.

"I have something singular to communicate to you, my dear, respecting a dream the nurse has had, and which I recommended her to communicate immediately to you!"

"Mysterious visitant!" exclaimed the lady.

And then her curiosity got the better of her displeasure, and the wily Katty having her own private reasons, which were certainly of sufficient weight, chimed in with her lady's humour, and described her dream with all the pomp and circumstance which an Irishwoman can so well introduce when such is her pleasure.

"Ye see, my Lady, I was tossicated and unasy on account of the heat; and whin I did get a wink, the first thing I saw was a pale pink gauze scarve like, very pale and very purty. Very pale, and very purty intirely it was, and it floating, floating in the air, until at last, whin it came right near me, I saw, embroidered on it with moss rose-buds—"

"Moss rose-buds!" repeated Mrs. Cavendish Jones.

"No less, my Lady, moss rose-buds—these very letters, M. A. R. I. A. N; making Marian, Ma'am."

"What a sweet name!" exclaimed Mrs. Cavendish Jones! "sweet, lovely name!—Marian! There was a maid Marian, and—but,

no, I don't think there was ever a queen Marian. Well, go on."

"And the scarve, Ma'am, floated, and floated, until it went right over the darling's bassanet; and there it hung, so bright, and light, and handsome, there never was anything looked so sweet: it was quite a pictur!"

"Very extraordinary!" said Mrs. Jones; "now tell me the next."

"The next," replied Katty, "was much the same thing. No great difference; that is to say, *great* difference," she repeated, seeing that Mrs. Cavendish Jones looked discontented, and well knowing that the name must take a fast hold on her imagination to secure its adoption. "The rose-buds, my Lady, in the second drame war *white*—not red at all."

"And the scarve meandered through the air in the same manner?"

"Yes, Ma'am; that is, it floated through the air."

"Katty, it is very odd that you should dream this dream, and not me."

"That's jist what I thought, Ma'am. I wonder this shouldn't be shown to Mrs. Caven-

dish Jones, said I to myself, because she's exactly the lady to make sense out of it; not all as one as me; only maybe it was shown to me to tell you, that's all, Ma'am."

"Are you apt to dream?"

"Very, Ma'am, whin necessary," replied the sapient nurse, "very indeed, my Lady; and so is the Irish people all through."

"Indeed, second-sighted, like the Scotch. I did not know it."

"Nor I either," thought Katty *aside*. "My Lady," she continued aloud, "it's greater wisdom than the Scotch; for the half of us drames, and we wide awake, going along the streets, and our eyes open. Sure, there was a grandfather of my own that was broke horse and fut, as a body may say, before the flood, and yet he went on, living, my Lady, as if he had all the riches of the world to live upon, and just through his drame."

"What dream, in Heaven's name? How very singular!"

"Fait, my Lady, it wasn't at all *singular* he

was, but *plural;* plural all through: for every one belonging to him had the same talent,—dreaming they had the wealth of the world to spend, and nothing to live on, barring credit; and that, my Lady's, like the bad silver, it wears out with much rubbing: its lots of it one gets when its not wanting, an' that's the thruth."

"But the other dream," said the lady; "I have heard that the charm lies in the third dream."

"So it does; and look at the sense and instruction of this, my Lady. Now, just to look into it, as a body may say, for curosity, nothing more; only just to look into it. The first drame, my Lady, and the M, and the A, and the R, and the I, and the A, and the N, was all worked in white rose-buds—"

"Red, you said, my good nurse," interrupted Mrs. Cavendish Jones.

"Ay, Ma'am, I intended to say red; but I've a troublesome tongue—an unruly mimber, Ma'am, that won't always do as I bid him; and so it's red, sure enough. The first was red, the

second white: that was it. But, my dear Lady, whin I dreamt the drame the third time, what do you think?"

"Think!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones, "why, how should I know what to think?"

"True for ye, Ma'am dear, that thinking's no easy work; that it isn't: and how should you know anything about it, barring you war tould? Well, then, whin I saw the beautiful banner in the air the *third* time, every second letter was white and red rose-buds: the M red, and the A white,—and so on. Wasn't it beautiful?"

"Indeed, it must have been," replied the lady; "and affording at the same time much scope for intellectual speculation. I can imagine nothing more beautiful. It seems as if some mighty mystery were connected with this dear child."

"True for ye, Ma'am, dear."

"As if the especial hand—indeed, I may say, hand and arm, of Providence interfered to name this angel; does it not, nurse?"

"True for you, Ma'am, dear—very true;

and, to be sure, you may say that, or anything else you plase: why not?"

"So unless—you understand—unless there should be some more dreams, why, I will simply add this to the other names: that is all. Certainly, it is a very extraordinary circumstance."

And so Katty Macane gained her point.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE "BLUE" PARTY.

THE next morning came, and certainly ushered in a day of glory to our original Irish-woman. Like all earthly glories, however, it had its alloy. She was afraid her grey silk (Spanish silk) dress would be spoilt—she was afraid some of the beautiful ladies and gentlemen would be half-murdered with the "pisinous" things put in the confectionary. Above all, she feared her darling might cry. She had no fears whatever that day connected with Mrs. Cavendish Jones, feeling assured "the flathery, and the novelty, and all that, would keep her heart up—keep her in the one mind, and keep her quiet:" and so it did. The baby looked a perfect angel in satin and Lisle lace; Mrs Cavendish, as Miss Arabella Womble informed her, the perfection of a foreign statue she had once seen, of Charity, in white marble: and then Mrs. C. Jones's head and

feathers modestly declined on the left side. The other god-mamma was a pretty laughing girl, who thought it an important step to *be* a god-mamma. And poor Mr. Cavendish Jones had been forced into a new blue coat and a glass coach, to officiate as god-papa. The bells of Old Chelsea church rang a merry peal on the occasion; the child's name was entered on the register—notwithstanding the many deliberations and debates concerning it—as Elizabetha Juliana Marian Winter. The first being out of compliment to Mrs. Jones; a delicate attention insisted on by her husband, in whom *any* attention was a novelty. The second being a *delicate* attention conferred by Mrs. C. J. upon, as she called her, "her sweet sister-god-mamma; the third being consequent upon the wonderful and mysterious vision of Katty; and the singular termination having been, with much self-gratulation, suggested by the lady, as at once "showing the season when the lovely *creation* burst upon them."

If many had not witnessed the christening, it would have lost half its charm in the eyes of

the mistress of the festival. The party returned to a sumptuous breakfast; and there was to be a ball and supper the same night. In addition to their own footman and three hired waiters, Mrs. Cavendish Jones had borrowed Lady Bab Hesketh's page, and had, moreover, been fortunate enough to secure Lady Bab's promise that she would look in upon her for "five seconds" during the "progress" of her evening: Lady Bab being, be it remembered, a real living lion,—poetical, musical, and controversial; and that at a time when lions, though quite as clever, were not by any means as common as they are at present; and when no rational, pains-taking, house-keeping gentlewoman of moderate abilities and education would dare to venture into the literary menageries, where circumstances were misrepresented, and slanders propagated, with as much activity as in less intellectual circles. Forbid it! that we should attempt a sneer at a *réunion* of veritable talent. We honour it too much, and respect its *real* professors too highly, to compromise ourselves by

so vain and so unworthy an effort; but the ill-temper and bitterness of assumed genius, cloaking itself in the rude garb of "originality," and presuming to forget the kindliness and grace which garnish true merit, have often moved our spleen; and when we have witnessed the petty presumption of petty writers, we have forgotten for a moment to be grateful for, and felt ashamed of, our calling.

A large party of the middling, or, indeed, of those who consider themselves the *upper class* of society, is invariably of a mixed character; we may be almost certain of meeting some vulgar and ill-bred people, who really astonish by their ignorance, and *wish* to astonish by their wealth;—wealth! that pushes its yellow visage everywhere, and is welcomed for its own sake, and its *own* sake only! How often are people of small fortunes, but good birth, heard to exclaim, "Oh, Mrs. So-and-so! well, poor woman, she is very, very vulgar, *but she keeps her carriage*, and is *so* good-natured!" The carriage rolls off with

the vulgarity, and wealth makes its footing sure.

The father of Mr. Cavendish Jones had made his fortune in Wales. Not, I believe, in actual trade, but by speculations connected with mines or quarries, or something of the kind. The son pursued his father's occupation for some time, and then, not being of a particularly active disposition, thought he might enjoy life much better in London than he could amid the fastnesses of the beautiful vale of Festiniog.

Cavendish Jones (we only knew him in his latter days) always suggested the idea of a man whose mind, well commenced, had been left unfinished.

He was earnestly good-natured, good-tempered, and remarkably fond of good living. His wife annoyed him; but then his life would have been like a summer sky, if it had not been for that *one* cloud; and he would undoubtedly have sunk into an indolent state both of health and spirits, if it had not been for the frequent agitations her whims and

oddities occasioned. Cavendish Jones was a man, who would have been an affectionate husband, had he met with an affectionate wife; but, at a very early period, her affectations and absurdities chilled his heart; and the love which, if concentrated, would have made a very respectable whole, was, owing to his lady's bad management, scattered and frittered away into the thousand different channels of acquaintanceship, which confer no advantages either on the giver or receiver. His good-nature made him incline to the Foundling in preference to all the other pets of his lady's selection, and he had already felt an interest in an infant "who never cried."

About eight o'clock the assembling together of the party commenced. Tea, coffee, thin bread and butter, variegated biscuits, and their attendants, in the "library;" wreaths of artificial flowers twined up the banisters, and the air steaming with the hot perfume of pastiles; the hired waiters were, as usual, engaged in jostling against each other, and improving the pronunciation of every name unfortunately entrusted to their

care, until, with a totally altered intonation, it was lisped forth by the "pretty page" at the door of what Mrs. Cavendish Jones called "her great drawing-room." The mistress of the fête had selected three poetical-looking young gentlemen (the brothers Prescott) to act as masters of the ceremonies, each distinguished by a sprig of lily-of-the-valley in his button-hole, emblematic—she repeated to every one—of her "sweet nursling." Dancing began, as it always does in England, with more formality than spirit; and a knot of respectable rubber-of-whist-looking people assembled in a tolerably spacious third drawing-room, which was fitted up tent-fashion, and illuminated by an out-of-place Chinese lantern, which every now and then dropt a little —a very little, drop of oil upon a lady who gloried in a green and scarlet turban, of magnificent dimensions, and the turban received the oil amid its multitudinous folds.

There were no less than four whist tables in this room, clumpt together after the fashion of autumn crocuses; and certainly the craniums

of those engaged at that mysterious and selfish appropriation of time, room, and amusement, would not have afforded any particularly intellectual development to the seekers after phrenological practice.

Miss Arabella Womble and another lady, very dissimilar in appearance to the preceptress, were seated on a hard-cushioned sofa, which stretched along the wall.

The strange lady was well and gracefully dressed; her features, without being handsome, were pleasing, and of an observant rather than an animated expression, yet her eyes were large and lustrous, and it was evident that the long dark lashes of their lids tempered their brilliancy. Miss Arabella sat bolt upright, her clothes carefully arranged, her hands crossed in front, her eyes more vigilant even than usual, and her feet systematically placed in the first position. The truth was, that she was perplexed. She could not make out who the well-dressed, quiet-looking lady by her side was; no one seemed to know her. She had made two attempts to arrest the

progress of her hostess, but it was like hunting a sky-rocket at the moment of its highest elevation; she found it impossible to chain her for an instant, particularly as she had got into the train of Lady Bab Hesketh, and was rather more exhilarated than usual, from the fact of the lioness having laid her paw familiarly upon her arm, and called her "friend."

Poor Miss Womble had tried in vain to draw the silent lady into what she called conversation, but which was, in fact, only gossip: the silent lady's yes and no did not, however, prevent her continuing

> "To spout, and spout, and spout away,
> In one weak, washy, everlasting flood."

"What a sweet woman Mrs. Cavendish Jones is!" she said, making a last effort.

"I have not the pleasure of her acquaintance," was the stranger's reply.

It was on the tip of Miss Womble's tongue to say, "Indeed! then how came you here?" but she thought she had better endeavour to keep silence for a very little time. She could

not, however, keep it long; it is difficult for an empty-headed woman to do so.

"Pleasant party, Ma'am," she re-commenced.

"I hope it is," replied the well-dressed lady. "I like to see people happy."

"Fond of music, Ma'am?"

"Yes, very."

"Mrs. Cavendish sings beautifully 'Water parted,' 'The Woodpecker,' and Italian or French. Have you seen the baby yet, Ma'am?"

This abrupt question was put as a *dernier resort*; for the stranger did not express any astonishment at the recapitulation of Mrs. Cavendish Jones's accomplishments, nor intimate a desire to hear them called into action.

"I have not seen it. I suppose we shall not see it to-night."

"Oh yes; Mrs. Cavendish will have it brought down stairs exactly at twelve. She wishes to accustom it to wake when awoke, and to remain awake without crying. She has framed—and, I may presume to say, framed with my assistance—a peculiar educa-

tional code, that cannot fail to render the child a prodigy. Our system is quite distinct from Miss Edgeworth's, which I consider impracticable, or Hannah More's, which I fear might be termed pedantic. And, you know, Nature —dear, sweet Nature!—that is my principle: cherish Nature!"

Miss Womble elevated her eyes at the moment with a species of mock enthusiasm that exceedingly amused the stranger, and then, letting them drop, she repeated—

"The child must be a prodigy!"

"Well, Madam," replied the lady, "as you seem to desire it, I hope she may."

"I trust in Providence she will," repeated Miss Arabella: "it would be a cruel thing were she not, after the money—the advantages—the—the—in fact, incomprehensibilities —which have been, and will be, lavished upon her. It would wreck the delicate sensibilities of her all-accomplished patroness were she to turn out a shocking common-place girl; but I hold such an event to be perfectly impossible, because——"

Miss Womble was about to enter upon the subject of female education, which, fortunately for my readers, she was obliged to defer, as three of her friends (or rather, I should say, acquaintances, for the poor woman, received even as she was, had no *friends*) entered. Her dictatorial voice sunk into familiar tones as she addressed them—

"Oh, Mrs. Harricote, I'm so glad to see you! How do ye do, Mr. Cooke? Oh, Miss Sophy, charmed to meet you here! Escaped from the crowd, eh?—delightful! Is it not the 'feast of reason and the flow of'—*sounds?*"

"Flow of bad tea below, and cold air all up the staircase," growled Mr. Cooke, plumping himself into a chair, close to the end of the sofa on which the well-dressed lady was sitting. "Sophy" (to his tall daughter), "draw that curtain close."

"Poor, dear Mr. Cooke, you are *so* delicate!" said the still standing Arabella, in a tone of sympathy, while looking down on the round, shining head, and glazed, rosy cheeks, of the fat old alderman.

"Any chance of a cut-in for a rubber?" inquired the important-looking Mrs. Harricote; "or could we *squeeze* out another table? There's me and Mr. Cooke, and you and this lady——"

"Thank you," said the stranger, politely, but coldly; "I never play cards."

"Bless my heart!" exclaimed Mr. Cooke, placing his hands on his knees, and pirouetting half round, as if he were seated on a music-stool, so as to obtain a full view of the lady's face. "What! never play cards? Well, that *is* odd. You dance, then, *Marm*, I presume?"

"No," she replied, quietly; "my dancing days are over."

"I suppose you have a moral objection to cards?" he continued, still staring in her placid countenance.

"I do not blame those who play," replied the lady, evading the question; "but they would not amuse me, and, indeed, I do not know how to use them."

"Neither dance nor play cards?" he continued; "then you play the piano?"

"Indeed, I do not."

"Neither play the piano, nor cards, nor dance!" repeated the rotund gentleman, earnestly; "then, pray, Ma'am, may I ask, what is it you do do?"

A slight flush of displeasure at his impertinence overspread her features for a moment; but the singular rudeness of the question, and the oddity of her catechist's appearance, struck her as being so ludicrous, that she could not altogether repress a light, almost childish, laugh: it was her only reply.

"I wonder," said Mrs. Harricote, in a discontented tone, "why Mrs. Jones arranges so badly; only four card-tables for a hundred and twenty people!"

"It's a christening," apologised Miss Womble."

"But we're not all to be christened," said Mrs. Harricote, still more peevishly.

"How do you do, Mrs. Harricote?" inquired a good-natured, stupid-looking gentleman, with large whiskers, between the deals, and the pro's and con's and bitter words which invariably accompany the shuffling.

"Pretty well, Sir, I thank you," replied the lady, gently inclining herself forward; by which polite movement any one might infer that the gentleman possessing the large whiskers was a person of what Mrs. Harricote considered consequence.

"Did it rain when you came in?" he said again; but, this time, Mrs. Harricote, be it observed, did *not* incline herself forward; on the contrary, she drew herself into a line of the most perfect perpendicular: she felt insulted, and she showed it, while replying—

"Sir, one never knows whether it rains or not *when one comes in one's own close carriage.*"

"I wonder, Mrs. Harricote," said the Alderman, who had not quite got over the half-mirthful half-scornful laugh of his fair neighbour—"I wonder you bring out them *two* beautiful greys of yours on a wet night; if I was you, I'd have a single harness for night-work, and only drive *one.*"

"Sir," replied Mrs. Harricote, who, like a primed pistol, seemed always ready to go off

" if one went about with one horse, one would be taken *for a fly*."

" I am sorry to hear your house is damp, Miss Womble," remarked the persevering Cooke, who prided himself upon his rudeness, and called it honesty.

" Damp, my dear Sir !" ejaculated the horrified lady, holding up her whitish hands. " Who could have invented such a calumny ?"

" Heard it for fact; gold all washed off your China *sarcers*—tea-cups half-full of water—young ladies all with colds in their heads—ordered three dozen pocket-handkerchiefs from town—cotton ones, to be charged as cambric in the Christmas bills, eh ?"

And he half-closed the lid over one of his gooseberry eyes, in an incipient, vulgar wink.

" La, Mr Cooke !" said Miss Arabella, " you are *so* droll ! He *is* so very droll and odd," she added, turning to the silent lady : " a christening supper would not be a supper without Mr. Cooke ;"—(in a half-whisper)—" such an odd creature—quite a character—educated all

his daughters—charming girls!—have you any little ones of your own, Ma'am?"

"Have you any little ones of your own?" The question is sometimes asked for lack of conversation—sometimes from idle curiosity; yet what a gush of feelings and recollections does it bring to a bereaved mother! The strange lady shook her head, but made no reply.

There was no one near her capable of speculating on the probable cause of the sadness which at once overspread the lady's countenance. There are few who look upon a woman's face with any other motive than that of deciding whether it be brown or fair, handsome or ugly: deep and stormy feelings may lie concealed beneath its placid surface, like rocks under a sunny sea. The stranger's lip had quivered, and her pale cheek grew a shade paler; but Mr. Cooke only wondered how stupid she must be "to do nothing;" and Miss Arabella resolved to be civil to her still, because—she might have nieces to put to school! Her after-attempts to excite attention were, however, total failures; her associate on

the sofa was studiously polite, but nothing more; and Miss Womble at length abandoned the task in despair.

While matters were as we have endeavoured to describe them, there was a sudden buz and bustle at the door, that drowned the tones of the Copenhagen waltz, to which three or four young ladies *only* were waltzing—for in those days the custom of reclining in the arms of strange gentlemen was more avoided by our English ladies than it is at present, and waltzing was considered like any other foreign curiosity, as something not akin to England and the English :—there was, as I have said, a buz and bustle at the door, and Lady Bab Hesketh, followed by Mrs. Cavendish Jones and a whole train of starers, entered.

Among the guests were four inveterate, hardened whist-players, who did not look off their cards; the others immediately directed their eyes to the learned lady, who flourished herself into a seat without farther ceremony. She was a little ugly woman, with a mirthful yet sarcastic expression of countenance, an

evident affectation of manner, and, whatever her other qualifications might be, endowed with a superabundant portion of self-esteem. Were it possible that a woman could be made the literary idol of the universe, she would incur far less risk of being spoiled than she does by being installed president of a coterie. Lady Bab had unfortunately attained that distinction some years previous to her appearance in the salon of Mrs. Cavendish Jones; her aptness, oddity, impudence, and affectation, had rendered her amusing long before. She even thought of aping the instructive. She assumed a liberal tone in speaking and writing, because such a tone suited her temper rather than her judgment, and because she had a magnificent desire to be considered a sort of miniature Madame de Staël. Her conversation was amusing, but seldom brilliant; she talked a great deal without saying anything worth remembering, and, when you tried to recall what she had chattered of unceasingly, you wondered how it was you had been even amused.

She loved conversing of fine people; she loved patronage and patronising; was most gracious in her promises of support and protection to all juvenile blues; but the moment a blue attained her majority, and set up for herself, her ladyship's friendship fell below zero. She had none of those ennobling qualities which emanate from a great and generous mind; and now, when younger and better spirits were springing up around her, when female talent was becoming less a matter of astonishment than it had hitherto been, she fell back upon a less refined set than had formerly worshipped round her throne, and, finding it impossible to exist without admiration, was obliged to be content with the attention of those whom, strange enough to say, she despised—urged, doubtless, by the same weakness which makes a fine intelligent actor bow to the clappings of a vulgar gallery.

Literary women are much to be honoured who study to make their *caste* respected and beloved, rather than followed and admired. It is a woman's especial duty to educate the

*affections:* and this cannot be done without strengthening the intellect. The duties of man and woman are as distinct as possible in society; yet, as *each* has an *equally* important task to fulfil, so *each* ought to have the same proportion of advantages, though bestowed with a totally different aim and end. In consequence of this distinction not being properly understood, almost all the mistakes and evils of an ill-arranged education arise; and yet we cannot but think the distinction easily comprehended. We should educate a man so as to make his way in the open, stormy world with honour and respectability, according to the station of life in which he is placed; a woman we should so educate that she might be able to *assist* man in attaining such an object; or, if necessary, to be able to think and act for herself.

If a female possesses a distinctive and creative talent, such an education would at once assist that talent, without destroying the delicacy and grace which are the most charming and attractive characteristics of the sex.

"You are reading Greek," we said, one morning, to an only son of a dear friend.

"Yes," he replied, holding up his head and looking as great as possible; "yes, I am learning Greek, because, one day, I want to be a clever man."

"And you, Louise, you are learning Greek, too: I suppose you want to be a clever woman," we said to his sister, a bright and fair-haired girl, older than her brother.

"No," was her sweet answer; "I hope to be a good woman; *but we are only two together in the world,* and learning with George helps him on, and *we now take pleasure in the same things.*"

Most wise, thought we; there was no pedantry in *that,* though the girl learnt Greek —the foundation was laid to make her a good sister and a good wife. "We are but two together in the world." What an exquisite picture of affection! *But two* in the world together, so our love for each other *must,* of necessity, be great! What a delightful thing it is when "both take pleasure in the

same things!" What an infinity of sorrow would be prevented, and how much the happiness of life would be increased and prolonged, if this was indeed the case more universally?

Poor Lady Bab had the satisfaction of possessing a singularly tame and gentlemanly-looking husband. I cannot say they both took pleasure in the same things, because each most greatly delighted in his or her own respected self; indeed, Mr. Hesketh was a sort of hanger-on to his wife's reputation, having no very distinctive attribute of his own, except, indeed, that he played the flute, and frequently formed a sort of soft undulating accompaniment to his wife's eloquence, which he was ever politely careful not to interrupt.

Lady Bab's appearance in the sanctum of the card-players created pretty much the same sensation which the entrance of a well-fed tame lioness would occasion in a kennel of moderately brave and most moderately sagacious quadrupeds; all who did regard her regarded her with terror, though they had different modes of displaying or endeavouring to conceal their

dismay. Some grinned a smile, others shrank into themselves—a contraction which it must be confessed was of marvellously small dimensions. Many fidgeted, and, as to the round-headed, rough-coated little alderman, had there been a possibility of "bolting," he would have disappeared. Mrs. Harricote bridled, not exactly knowing the proper degree of dignity or humility which a woman who kept "her own close carriage," and drove *two* horses therewith, should manifest to a lady —a lady in her own right—who made no scruple of acknowledging that she was privileged to be the vainest woman in the world, having written somewhat between twenty and forty volumes of books. Miss Arabella Womble called, loud enough to be heard, to her *ci-devant* pupil Miss Cooke, of lanky aspect, "to be sure and note every word that escaped from the *talented* lips of the illustrious lady whom she had the opportunity to look upon;" and poor Miss Cooke, so encouraged, did take her eyes off a large peony which flourished on the carpet, and (for it was her first party), being as green as the

leaves of the said peony, she ejaculated, upon seeing Lady Bab, "Oh, la!" Unfortunately for Miss Cooke, Lady Bab heard the exclamation, and saw the look which accompanied it.

"Come here, my dear *long* young lady," she said, always anxious to get up a scene, where she was certain of the *premier rôle*; "why did you say 'Oh, la?'"

The poor girl trembled, but did not answer.

"Go to the lady, Kitty," commanded her aldermanic papa; "she won't hurt you. What do you look so *sheepish* for?—Writing a book may make a lady a lion, but it won't make her a wolf. Ah, ah!"

"La, Mr. Cooke! you *are* so droll!" murmured Miss Womble. "Go," she continued, "sweet Katherine, and answer Lady Bab, when she condescends to interrogate."

"Now, why did you say, 'Oh, la!' when you looked at me?" repeated the woman of genius.

"Because—because—" stammered Kitty, twisting her fingers.

"My lady," said the schoolmistress, coming

forward to the relief of her pupil, and for the display of her new green satin, "she is timid, modest, delicate, sensitive."

Lady Bab raised her glass to a level with her eye, and said, drily, "A pupil or relation of yours, I presume;" and that observation was followed by a sort of *humming* from amid her Ladyship's followers, a set who always chorused remarks which, to the general run of homely-minded individuals, would be degraded into the list of "*commonplace*," and the words "penetrating!" "brilliant!" "clever!" "capital hit!" rose above the buz of approbation.

Miss Arabella was mortified, but not abashed.

"Come, child," said Lady Bab, "why did you say 'Oh, la!' Now, do not look at that fine green lady, but tell the truth."

Poor Kitty had no "apron-string" to look at, or, if the adage say true, she might, peradventure, have found an excuse; but, driven to extremities, she did speak the truth.

"I was surprised to see you so little, my Lady."

"Poor innocent!" said Miss Womble. "Did you not remember that—that——"

"That," interrupted Lady Bab, looking spitefully at her, "intellect does not extend over a given number of square or long inches, but dwells here?" and she touched her brow twice with a finger upon which sparkled a most brilliant ring.

"Fascinating distinction!" lisped Mrs. Cavendish Jones.

"Capital!" "extraordinary!" "wonderful mind!" repeated the chorus; while poor Miss Cooke absolutely shrunk down by the silent lady's side, who seemed amused at the scene, while Miss Arabella continued standing.

"It is cooler here than in the other room," said Lady Bab; "and, as you all wish it so much, if the harp is brought in, and Hesketh (where is Hesketh?) will tune it, I will try a melody."

The chorus divided; some went to seek the harp, others remained to repeat their strain of "extraordinary!" "powerful!" "metaphysical!" "wonderful!"

The card-players were obliged to stand up from their unfinished games, that the tables might be pushed more closely together, so as to make room for the harp. Mr. Hesketh attended and drew up the strings; during which operation Lady Bab was explaining to Mrs. Cavendish Jones the benefit which might arise to the community at large if she had the courage to copy the habits of the American Indians—or "some such people"—who slung their naked infants, in wicker baskets, upon the trees.

At last the little, wrinkled, sharp-looking woman sate to the harp, tried over a few chords, and pronounced it tuneless. Her voice, she declared, could not accomplish a solo.

"Rather than disappoint those friends who hang upon your accents," murmured Mrs. Cavendish Jones, "I will *dare* a second."

"Delighted to hear *you*, my charming friend," replied Lady Bab, "by yourself, but I never sing with any one except Lady Isabella—by the way, where is she? She brought me, and I brought her, but she slipped away. Has any one seen Lady Isabella?" she con-

tinued, throwing her arm over the harp, in an attitude by which her finely-moulded arm looked to particular advantage.

"Here I am," said the strange lady, who had been the object of so much curiosity; "here I am."

Poor little Mr. Cooke looked aghast: he had asked a lady in her own right "What could she do?" and Miss Womble had sat and talked to her without once saying "My Lady!"

Lady Isabella sung the second which Lady Bab desired, in a full round tenor, and moreover accompanied her literary ladyship on the harp. Mr. Cooke stood by, with his mouth open, and, when the duet was finished, exclaimed, "La, now! my Lady, your Ladyship said your Ladyship could not play."

"Not the piano," was "my Lady's" reply, while reseating herself in her favourite corner.

Lady Isabella Gascoigne was Lady Bab's youngest sister; there was a difference of sixteen or seventeen years in their ages, yet Lady Bab's dress and manner were by many degrees the more juvenile of the two. Lady

Isabella had been, for some time, a rich and childless widow; and, though much sought, remained unwon. Her mind—gentle, discriminating, and kindly—would have attained as much moral perfection as can be well conceived, but for an inactivity of disposition that rendered many of her most generous plans and best intentions of none avail. In every respect superior to her sister, she was both too good-natured to assert that superiority and too indolent to take the trouble to do so. Fonder of thinking than of talking, she submitted to be led about in her own carriage, and by her own horses, wherever her sister pleased; and, though she did sometimes maintain her own consequence, and astonish Lady Bab by a demand to have her own way in her own house, such efforts cost her too much labour to be frequently repeated. It was melancholy to see so comprehensive and imaginative a mind as hers overgrown by the moss and lichens of indolence; and to know that the world would never be benefited by its noble feelings and just ideas.

Lady Bab, having impressed every one in the unlucky card-room, who had not the knowledge before, with what she conceived to be a just idea of her own importance, and a veneration for her profound ability, moved to another room, still attended by her hostess, who manifested exceeding ill-breeding by paying almost exclusive attention to the person of the highest rank among her guests, and thereby affronting the remainder of her company. Indeed, before the festivities of the night were over, poor Mrs. Cavendish Jones felt that, by bringing so great a star into her hemisphere, she had injured her individual popularity. She had no idea of the entire harmony—the *whole*—which is necessary to the formation of agreeable society. The *réunion*, where each contributes something, is, indeed, but little understood in England. People go to great London parties expecting to be amused, but seldom with a notion of contributing to the amusement of others. Despite the dancing, the flirting, the lights, and the lioness, Mrs. Cavendish Jones's party was waxing flat, as all

assemblies do, when the supper hour approaches.

Despite the ices, negus, lemonade, and microscopic cakes, handed round in various-sized baskets and on various-sized waiters, the most ethereal young ladies and the most sentimental young gentlemen will grow hungry; and many of the gentlemen and chaperons looked positively disappointed when, instead of supper, the poor baby, supported on the substantial arms of the triumphant Katty, and half-suffocated in splendid lace, was introduced to make the round of the company. There was an instantaneous commotion amongst the young ladies, who always proclaim their affection for the dear, sweet, innocent "loves"—as a sort of heralding their intention and ability to make good wives and tender mothers as soon as possible. Each young lady was endeavouring to obtain a kiss; while some carried their tenderness to the extent of requesting permission to "take the angel." Katty's face beamed with happiness: no queen, progressing through her dominions, was ever half so happy

—her cheeks glowed, and her eyes glistened, and she moved onwards with an air of dignity that was "mightily" amusing—curtseying at every step—full of gratitude for the praise and the half-crowns—and yet, as she afterwards confessed, "fairly bothered with the poor ignorant cratures of handsome ladies, who weren't at all knowledgeable, and would have made the darlint cry over and over again, good-tempered as it was, only for the beautiful sup of Daffy's Elixir she gave it, which kept it half-asleep, why!" The gentlemen joked, as gentlemen think it right to do on stated occasions; and the rational portion of the assembly regretted sincerely that the poor child should have been disturbed.

"Fine infant—does you great credit, Nurse," said Lady Bab, when Katty, having been apprised that she was a "raale lady born," curtseyed low, lower, lowest, before her. "But," continued her ladyship, "I should like to see her stripped perfectly naked, placed in a basket half-full of sawdust, swinging from a tree in Hyde Park!"

This was too much for Katty's patience; and, overpowered by the impulse of the moment, she exclaimed—

"Oh, dacency, mee Lady! Is it the beautiful faymale child, mee Lady?—Oh, mee Lady!"

When earnest or excited, nothing could exceed the oily richness of Katty Macane's brogue. Lady Bab was instantly delighted: she had been half-asleep for the previous five minutes, but the *newness* of the Irish nurse awoke her at once. Murmurs of mingled praise of the beauty of the child and Mrs. Cavendish Jones's humanity had been repeated in different tones by different voices, and Lady Bab was always soon wearied by praise bestowed on others. Fixing her full, round eyes upon Katty's joyful countenance, she said—

"You are an Irishwoman?"

"Troth, my Lady, I'd be sorry to deny my counthry; for, if I did, maybe it 'ud be for returning the compliment!"

"Capital!" exclaimed Lady Bab. "Now *that* is quite Irish: charming! Pray, observe

the difference: if I had asked an English nurse if she was English, she would have simply answered, 'Yes, my Lady.' Do you know you are a charming person?"

"Many thanks to your Ladyship," said the proud Katty.

"How old are you?"

"My Lady, I cannot take upon me to say, because I never saw my register."

"There, Hesketh," said her Ladyship, with as much triumph as if she had discovered the longitude, "have I not often said a woman would never acknowledge her age?"

The chorus, as usual, chimed in "Wonderful!" "Clever!" Astonishing!" &c., while Hesketh (who was many years younger than his sposa) muttered that her Ladyship often demonstrated her own theory by her own practice.

"Do you remember the Rebellion?" she said, turning to the nurse, with the air of an inquisitor.

"I heard tell of it, my Lady," was Katty's cautious reply.

"You perceive," said Lady Bab, addressing the company, "Irish caution; they never commit themselves by words. I really will set off for Ireland next week. What an original you are!"

"Sure, the country would be proud to see you, my Lady," responded the cunning nurse; "and though your arm, my Lady, wouldn't be strong enough to save it, God help us! it would be beautiful enough to bless it."

The gentleman-chorus applauded this prettily-turned compliment to Lady Bab's solitary beauty; but the noise roused the unconscious infant, and, in spite of the dose of Daffy's Elixir, she began to cry.

"Whisht, a-lannan! whisht, a-cushla!" said the nurse.

Lady Bab fell into ecstasies.

"Isabella! Hesketh!" she exclaimed.—"Here!—Only listen! this charming person is speaking real Irish. Oh, Mrs. Jones! what a treasure you have got in this invaluable woman!"

Mrs. Cavendish Jones was delighted: Lady

Bab had thought something she possessed worthy of praise.

"Now, explain the meaning of this word," she continued, addressing Katty, "What was it?—a—a-lannan? Come, teach me the pronunciation."

"Oh, no need, my Lady! you turn your tongue to it beautiful!"

"And pray, my good creature, tell me what is the meaning of a-lannan?"

"Is it the maning of it, my Lady? Sure, then, I can't say, except that it's a'most the same thing as a-cushla."

"A cushin!" said her mystified Ladyship.

"No—I ask yer pardon, my Lady—a-cushla."

"Oh, I have it now! Few persons acquire a foreign language with the rapidity that I do. Some of the reviews, with their usual ignorant flippancy, thought fit to cavil at my Italian in my romance of 'Il Briganti;' not understanding that I used the literal idiom of each particular province into which my story was carried."

"Stupid!" "Despicable!" "Mean!" "Insignificant!" sung the chorus, as applied to the reviews; "Keen!" Acute!" "Penetrating!" as applied to the ill-used lady.

"A-coushla!" repeated Lady Bab, with self-satisfaction—"A-coushla!"

"How sweet it sounds from your Ladyship's lips!" chimed in Miss Womble.

Again Lady Bab pronounced the word: "I should imagine it derived from the French *couchez*. Tell me, good Nurse, does it not signify sleep or sleeping?"

"Oh no, my Lady, it's something a body might like—just as one, as if you said *avourneen*."

"Why, you are quite an Irish dictionary," said Lady Bab, twisting her speaking features into a smile, "and a metaphysician, too, for you separate the body from the soul; you said something a *body* might like—do you think that the soul and body have a distinct existence?"

"Indeed, my Lady," replied Katty, who was too genuine an Irishwoman ever to plead

ignorance, "I'm not quite prepared to say; but I think, my Lady—I think that one would be very awkward without the other; only I'd be for leaving it altogether to the clargy."

"Oh, that is evidence of your faith; you are a Papist, I suppose?" inquired the lady, laying as sharp an emphasis upon the word *Papist*, as if she had been born and bred one of those narrow-minded fanatics who steep God's love and mercy in their own bitterness, and then proclaim it to the world under the title of religion. "You are a Papist, are you not?"

"I am a *Roman*," replied the woman—"I'd never deny that—and so were all my people before me."

"Observe," said Lady Bab, "the native dignity of that speech—'I am a *Roman*, and so were my *people* before me!' Really, Mrs. Jones, I must run away with this nurse. If the Duchess of Dovedale were to catch her, it would be the saving of her evenings: poor woman! she is going so out of fashion!"

"Indeed, I cannot part with her," simpered the flattered Mrs. Jones; "and I can *pay* her as well as any duchess."

"Now, my dear Mrs. Jones, you *millionaires* always come down upon us poor nobility with your pay, pay. Have you no feeling for the general good?—no philanthropy?—no love of natural science? They have been getting up a subscription for the starving Irish; and if I produced this woman at the next general meeting, and illustrated the native wit, talent, and originality of the country, through her means; brought her forward,—in fact, to show the misery"——

Katty's indignation at the mention of "starving Irish" began simmering, but, at the word "misery," it instantly boiled over.

"Oh, my Lady! I ask yer pardon for making so bould: distress may come upon any country—and I'd be sorry to say who brought it; but they'll have their reward, one way or other, that's all; but it would be a dale genteeler to send the craythurs the money, without

any blarney or bother about it; and, saving yer presence, Ma'am, it's a bad example I'd be of misery, my Lady."

Her portly and handsome appearance confirmed this, as her eye moved rapidly round the circle; and, seeing that she had "the meeting" with her, she continued—

"Thank God! I never felt misery myself, nor aint likely, while I'm with this good lady for a mistress, and sees so much beauty smiling at every side of me; and yerself, Madam, to the fore, my Lady, who has the larning of the wide world packt into yer head—may it never grow grey with sorrow nor ache with pain!"

"Beautiful!—quite beautiful!" exclaimed Lady Bab, who vacillated from one whim or idea to another, unceasingly.—"Beautiful! My dear Mrs Jones, you must send this nurse and child down to Lady Isabella's for change of air—and I shall learn Irish—and, oh dear! *can* you dance an Irish jig?"

"Faith, my Lady," replied the smiling nurse, "many a one I danced *to the music of*

*my own heart;* but that's been still so long that it's ages since *I covered the buckle!*"

The genuine feeling and poetry which the first part of this reply betrayed moved even the placid Lady Isabel; for the first time she looked at the child, and tears gathered in her eyes: Katty saw it, and, with genuine good feeling, attempted to turn away. How mysterious it is, that, between the unlettered and the lettered, there frequently exist feelings of sympathy—self, and, as it were, simultaneously, created—born and perfected within a moment—which last as long as life exists, and are as unerring as they are unfathomable! Lady Isabella perceived that Katty understood her; and she remembered the Irish nurse and her infant charge long after they had faded from the memory of her volatile sister. The point that struck Lady Bab in Mrs. Macane's reply was the name of the step.

"'Cover the buckle'—an Irish step—a real Irish step—delightful! Positively, Katty must dance it!" exclaimed her Ladyship. "Can anybody play 'Cover the buckle?'"

No; no one, of course, could play it.

"Can you dance to no tune but that?" inquired Lady Bab.

Poor Katty looked bewildered. A whisper was spreading through the rooms that Lady Barbara Hesketh had caught a wild Irishwoman, and was going to make her dance an Irish jig. Every variation of countenance and expression crowded the doorways—all interest for the "dear!"—"sweet!"—"innocent!"—"lovely!"—"cherubic!"—"charming!"—"fascinating—infant!"—"creation!"—which had been declared to be like Lady This, Lord That, and Princess T'other (no one attempted to compare it to any *untitled* personage)—had vanished. People are always alive to their own amusement; and there was, it must be confessed, something very novel in the idea of a wild Irishwoman dancing a real Irish jig in a lady's crowded drawing-room.

"I can't, indeed, my Lady—I can't," said Katty, in an agony. "See, what ud become of the babby?"

"Send it to bed—or, Lady Isabella, *you* will hold it," said Lady Bab.

"The craythur would cry its two beautiful eyes out, my Lady, if it was *tuck* from me. Pray, excuse me, my Lady—some other time."

"Can nobody play that tune?" persisted her Ladyship, without hearing the expostulation or seeing Mrs. Cavendish Jones's long face; for though the request did come from Lady Bab, Mrs. Jones saw it was very absurd.

"If you please, my Lady, 'Cover the buckle' isn't a tune like 'Jig Polthougue,' or the 'Rakes of Malla,' or such-like; it 's only a step," said Katty, unwisely anxious to show her knowledge.

"Delightful!" exclaimed Lady Bab. "Then 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning' would do as well."

"It might be humoured, I 'll not deny it; though I 've heard many say it wasn't a born-jig."

"Tell those miserable fiddlers of yours, my dear Mrs. Jones, to play 'St. Patrick's Day' directly."

"Miserable! Lady Bab," repeated Mrs. Cavendish Jones; "I assure your Ladyship they constantly play at Carlton House. I pay them enormously; and yet it is a favour to get them. I do not suppose they either could or would play anything so common: I only engaged them for waltzes and quadrilles."

And, having so said, Mrs. Cavendish endeavoured to impart a dignified and offended expression to her thin features. Poor woman! she forgot herself: her temper got the better of her wisdom and of her politeness. What a restraint is politeness to selfish persons! Lady Bab laughed a contemptuous laugh.

"Really," she said, "you are quite a novice to be so imposed on: those men were never in a better house than this, depend on it. Hesketh, tell them to play 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.'"

The command was given in an imperial tone: the fiddlers tuned, or were tuning, when Katty curtsied again before the lady of the ascendant.

"If you plase, my Lady, to put it off; I

couldn't dance it by meeself; and it would take ever so long to insinse* these gintlemen into it."

"Oh, there is no necessity to incense them in any way," said Lady Bab: "this gentleman" (turning to the little fat Alderman Cooke) "looks very like a picture I once saw of an Irish priest, and could dance it with you."

"Many thanks, Ma'am; but, indeed, the gentleman's a dale too *sonsy* to bother himself with dancin'; and, any how, I couldn't cut a step, barring it was on a door, or something that way—sorra a step I could do, my Lady, forenint all this beauty and grandeur; it wouldn't be natural-like."

"There's phraseology!" said Lady Bab, turning to her admirers, who, if truth must be told, were very hungry, and began to think that her Ladyship exacted more homage than all the crowned heads of Europe put together. Still they played their play out to the last, and echoed, of course, her concluding sentence.

"We will take down a door!—oh! how de-

* Make them understand.

lightful!—quite original!" she said, when the echo had performed to her satisfaction.

"Indeed, indeed, my Lady, I can't!" said Katty, coming close to her Ladyship, and speaking in a lower tone. "Not a step could I handle at all at all. Sure I 'd walk from this to Portingale on my hands and knees to do yer noble Ladyship a sarvice; but it 's not in my power to oblige your honour, you understand, on account of a—a—hardness I have in my fut."

"A what, woman?—Speak out!" said Lady Bab, sharply.

"Why, thin, saving yer presence, my Lady, since ye will have it (though God forbid yer Ladyship ever should!), it 's a corn in the heart o' my fut that 's broke me entirely; and it was all the faut of that vagabone, Boneyparte—trapseing afther him, that murdered us all, and prevented the grate honour I should have had in dancing to plase ye, my Lady—bad luck to him!"

This confession was followed by a shout of laughter, in which Lady Bab joined; and, at

the same time, the poor infant broke into a loud scream, which the "whisht, a-lannan!—whisht, a-cushla!" of its nurse, failed to suppress; and Katty, to her great delight, was permitted to make a precipitate retreat. She ran up the stairs without any symptom of lameness; and, without looking to the right or the left, rushed into the nursery, and seated herself by a table upon which a lamp was burning: in an instant the infant was resting on her lap, and she had thrown off its robe.

"Bad cess to the ruffles! Ah, jewel, war ye! my birdeen! and whisht!" she said to the still sobbing infant, as she pressed its small rosy foot to her lips. "And was it yer toe I pinched, my precious, to get the squall out of ye? God forgive me!—that 's a sweet one!—it 's yerself that is sweet, my blessing! Sure there was no other way left for me to get rid of that poor fidgetty, knowledgeable, crackt-headed little lady, that would have bothered wiser brains nor mine; though I did put the comether on her at last. Peace, my darlint! till I put by the money—the godsends yer

poor nurse got. Half-a-guinea—whisht, will ye!—and a whole guinea, and two seven-shilling pieces: troth, they 'll fit illigant in my little grater; and as for the silver—well, whisht then, and I 'll let that alone for the present. Well, machree, it *was* curos—the only two that gave me nothin' but bother and blarney was the two they called born-ladies. Holy Mary!" she ejaculated, lifting up her eyes, and seeing Lady Isabella standing before her, "Holy Mary!—Oh, my Lady! I didn't mean you; if you had heard me to the end—"

"Stop, Nurse!" she said; "there is no need of apology: let me take that infant for a moment; do not stir; I will sit here."

Mrs. Macane saw that her hands trembled, as she rested the little Foundling on her knees. Attracted, perhaps by the glitter of a very brilliant brooch, it ceased crying, and looked with a loving smile into the lady's face. For several minutes Lady Isabel bent her head over it; and Katty, believing that she saw a tear glittering like a diamond through the dark ringlets which shaded her face, turned

away. When she spoke, however, there were no trembling tones in her voice.

"This dear infant's mouth is hot and dry, Nurse; you have given it some quieting mixture, and are not, perhaps, aware of the fever you may excite, or the jeopardy in which you place its life by such conduct."

"God bless you, my Lady! I only give it the least taste in life of the Daffy; and, sure, if the mistress hears it crying, she might turn aginst it, as she did agin the macs and parrots."

"It is indeed a lovely child, Nurse; be kind and tender to it. Your mistress is very fond of it."

"Very, Ma'am; that is, she is *at present* very fond intirely of her, the precious!"

"Did you want," continued Lady Isabel, smiling—"did you want to create the same disease on its foot that prevents your dancing?"

"Oh, my Lady!" replied Katty, unable to suppress a smile, "tread asy, if you plase; sorra a harm I did its darlint toe; and as to

my own, sure, you see, I had no other way of getting *shut** of that quare, bothersome little gentlewoman; but, I ax yer pardon, my Lady, to be sure, as ye are both ladies may-be ye are friends, or comradees, any way?

"We are sisters."

"Och, my Lady!" said the nowise discomfitted Katty; "I might have guessed it; I might well call her Ladyship quare, for isn't it the height of quareness to see one small lady leading the siven senses and all the hearts of the company away with her? And can there be anything so humblin' (which *is* bothersome, my Lady, you'll allow) to a poor ignorant woman like meeself than to be discoorsed by the most knowledgeable famale lady in Europe, may-be only barrin' yourself, my Lady?"

"It won't do, Nurse," said Lady Isabella; "it really will not do; you cannot—what is it you call it?—blarney me!"

"Oh, my Lady!" interrupted Katty.

"Be quiet; you are more foolish than I think you if you attempt it again. You love

* Rid.

this poor child; I see you do. If you remain here till *it wants a friend,* there is my card; you can always find me."

"God bless you! my Lady," replied the Irishwoman, yielding at once to her kindly feelings; she looked a moment on it, and added, "I wish this was the only card I had to play."

"I wish it was," replied Lady Isabel, as she gave her back the child. "But, Nurse, play them honestly and truthfully."

"Honestly, my Lady—ay; but, as to the truth, least said soonest mended. I'd scorn a lie; but sorra a bit could I get on at all at all without a little *management.* Thank ye, my Lady, but I don't desire goold from you; if ou'll only remember to keep a kind heart to the darlint child, my Lady—she *will* want it yet, for all the finery. Let me light you down, Madam; mind the step. May blessings make light your road to heaven, and Katty Macane see you there, I pray God! And, I ax yer pardon, I was cook, my Lady, till I turned to the child—but, now, take a taste of wild-fowl

at the supper, or the bussum of a chicken, or something that way, but don't touch their confictionary stuff (though the mistress would murder me if she thought I said so), for it's all vardegris and taretaric acid and chalk, and hogs'-lard for butter, and *pisin!*—that's the short and the long of the English confictionary, my Lady. So, good night, and God bless ye! —and you won't forget, my Lady!"

"What a fool that woman Jones is!" said Lady Bab, as she yawned herself back in Lady Isabel's carriage.

"What a conceited woman Lady Bab is!" said Mrs. Jones: "I hate selfish people! But it was a grand thing to have her for once: the first party she was ever at in Sloane Street was my christening."

## CHAPTER VII.

### FIRST LESSONS IN LIFE.

NOTHING seemed to puzzle Mrs. Cavendish Jones more than to arrive at a determination which, of all her *protegé's* names, was the best to call her by. One day she would direct Katty to "designate the interesting creation" as Winterella, the next she would have it called Juliana, and so on; then she quarrelled with the "sweet sister god-mamma," and, as the nurse said, "all as one as excommunicated her pretty name." Morning dressing, and exhibiting and spoiling the little foundling, was the amusement of the *fair capricieuse* during the first year of its varied life; and when, at two years old, it exhibited a most extraordinary degree of beauty, united to great sweetness of temper, and much activity of mind and body, Miss Womble pronounced, in a most satisfactory manner, that the child *was* a prodigy, and Katty—perfectly understanding that a prodigy

was a wonder—agreed with her to the very letter. It would be difficult to induce a belief that, even at so early an age, the education—the *moral* education—of that tender child had more than commenced. She had already learnt to submit to Mrs. Jones implicitly, though she did not love her; not that it was absolutely the submission of fear, it was rather that of necessity. Her large observant eyes would watch the various expressions of her protector's countenance, and then she would act in accordance with their expression. The natural effect of this sort of carefulness on the infant mind, is cunning, and Katty Macane fostered the child's cunning as if it had been a virtue; her mind, most fortunately, both for herself and others, was, however, highly-toned. That she was endowed with a vivid imagination was evident even at that early age, though Mrs. Cavendish Jones merely observed, "it was naughty of the child to scream in the dark, or be so easily frightened at mere shadows." She was fond of sharing, almost indiscriminately, what she had with those around

her; and Mrs. Cavendish Jones already began to designate this sweet childish generosity as carelessness. These qualities assumed a more decided character as she advanced in childhood. She would eagerly listen to her nurse's tales of giants, and dwarfs, and fairies, and steal from an admiring drawing-room to hear of midnight murders and desperate fights. Katty loved the child dearly, but her love was injudicious, nor had she an idea that she was cultivating one of the most bewitching yet painful gifts it is in the power of nature to bestow.

The little foundling was docile and obedient, when properly managed; but she was firm—firm to obstinacy—and resolute, when opposed. This quality caused her nurse many bitter tears, for she saw that in time it would operate to her darling's disadvantage.

The little lady had a will and a way of her own which was hard to manage; and when she had arrived at the age of five, nothing could surpass her obstinacy, except her affection. She required firm, kind, and reasonable treat-

ment, but she generally experienced the reverse; her nurse would contend a point for a few minutes, and then, to restrain her tears, give it up. Mrs. Jones was kind, or the contrary, as it suited her own temper, without any reference to her animated plaything. To expect reason from the unreasonable is the most unreasonable of all things.

The little maid was also exceedingly vain. She perceived that a considerable parade was made about dress, and her mind imbibed a love of finery, which, though Mrs. Jones condemned as *pernicious* by word of mouth, she cherished by example.

"You are too fond of dress, Lolla," she said to the child, who had pulled the end of her sash round to admire its beauty; "I shall order Nurse to put you on a stuff frock."

"You will not love me in a stuff frock, Mamma," was the reply.

"Oh, yes, if you are good."

The child shook her head.

"Why do you shake your head?"

"Because I heard you say you would not

walk with Mrs. Grayfield, though she was very good, because she looked so *sabby*."

"The case is altogether different," said Mrs. Cavendish Jones. "I am a grown-up lady, and may do as I please; you are a little girl, and must not love finery."

"Why not, if you may, Mamma?"

"Do not ask foolish questions, or be so troublesome, but go to your nurse, Lolla, and take off that sash."

Such was Mrs. Jones's reply to an intelligent and enquiring child; and such is the reply of many governesses, mothers, and nurses, who either will not take the trouble to inform, or are incapable of doing so. Our friend Katty would never have been chosen by the Society for the Dissemination of Useful Knowledge as an instructress of youth. She certainly attended to the health of the body; she ran, laughed, danced, and played with her charge in a most marvellous manner, but she had, of course, no system, no plan to go on; to hear the child praised for her beauty and cleverness was the summit of her ambition.

No fairy ever more devoutly prayed that her charge might be endowed with its magic. "It's the great chance for her," thought the nurse, "the great chance of all for her is the beauty, because the mistress 'ill always turn to her as long as *she's* praised *through* the child." "Hould up yer head; there's money bid for ye," was her constant observation to the Foundling when going to the drawing-room, to which was added the instruction "and now, *avourneen!* watch the Mamma's humour, and don't cross her on no account whatsomever; only smile and look purty whatever she says, and be as *divartin* as you can, my blessing you was! Now, mind yer own Katty, and 'll tell ye the beautifulist story about the Queen of the Fairies, or Freeny the Robber, when you come back, that iver you heard. Hould up yer head—stay, just dance over the last steps you got from the dancing-master. Success! Well, that *was* beautiful! And the bits o' words o' French—I'm no grate judge to be sure, but ye turns yer

tongue to them wonderful, to my ear. Now show off, my precious! Another kiss before I put you in at the door! God's blessing be about ye!"

So much for poor Katty's tutelage; enough to turn the brain of an older girl, compounded as it was of affection, affectation, and display. The drawing-room system was, if possible, worse. Big people are seldom sufficiently careful of what they say before little people. One afternoon Mrs. Cavendish had praised to a lady the shape and style of her bonnet, and when her husband came in, she commenced abusing it in no measured terms.

"Naughty Mamma told a fib, said Lolla (as she was then called).

"What do you mean?" inquired Mr. Jones.

"Mamma praised the bonnet to the lady," said the child.

"Oh, fie!" exclaimed Mr. Jones.

"I did no such thing," said Mrs. J., growing angry; "and if I did, how dare you repeat it? Why don't you sit quiet on your

education-chair, hold up your head, and mind your dolls? Little girls must hear all, and say nothing. Go to your nurse, and learn better manners."

"That child is more than I can manage, Cavendish," said the lady, when poor "Lolla" poutingly left the room; "and Miss Womble says it is all owing to her having had an Irish nurse."

"I am sure, my dear, I thought your various systems must have done wonders. I paid your bookseller thirty-two pounds for works on education only last week, and the house has been like a school, with all sorts of masters. I think, for so young a child, a governess would be better."

"Ah, my dear! I thought of *that*. I assure you, Mr. Jones, there are few things I do *not* think of; and Lady Bab was good enough to recommend me a very charming person, who could teach Latin, and chemistry, and Italian, and Pestalozzi's system, and everything in the world; but she was so unconscionable in her demands—wanted thirty pounds a

year, and would not dine in the nursery! besides, these sort of people destroy one's domestic comfort."

Mr. Jones sighed; for, notwithstanding his good dinners, and all that kind of thing, he knew he enjoyed but little of what could be termed "domestic comfort."

"I have been thinking," continued the lady, "that it might be as well to send Katty Macane back to the kitchen, and hire Lady Bab's Swiss maid, whom she wishes to part with; then the child could learn French without any expense—and, really, education *is* expensive."

"I thought you said that Swiss woman was a great liar, my dear," said Mr. Jones.

"So she is; yet not worse than others, I dare say. Your favourite, Katty, does not mind a white lie, as she calls it; but Liza makes such lovely caps!—and then there is a something about French people—a *grace*, Lady Bab says."

"I tell you what, my dear," observed Mr. Jones, leaning back in his chair, as he always did when about to say anything which he con-

sidered original and extraordinary—"I tell you what, since the breach between Lady Bab and her sister Lady Isabel, Lady Bab makes a convenience of you. She has been gradually cast off by her old set—gone out of fashion—and yet you take up with her in a way which I cannot understand."

"I did not suppose you could," replied the lady, with a civil sneer; "her ladyship is a woman of genius."

"Thank you, my dear."

"You are quite welcome, my love."

"I am sure of that, my dear; or to anything else of the same sort."

"Really, Mr. Jones, you are a great brute to shatter my weak nerves by such observations."

"I always considered myself a particularly fine specimen of the animal 'creation,' as I think you call Lolla."

"Thank you for the sneer, Sir; I always thought you turned my humanity on behalf of that unprotected child into ridicule;

but go on, Sir, go on; you will find at last the lamb turned into the lion."

"Interesting phenomenon that, in natural history!" said Mr. Jones, in that quiet tone which is so provoking to irritable people; and while he spoke, he crossed his feet and looked up to the ceiling.

"Sneer away, Sir! You may turn the unoffending child out of doors if you please, as you did my poor dear macaws and monkeys; but if she goes, I go—that's all."

"By the Lord Harry!" exclaimed Mr. Jones, puffing out his rosy cheeks, "you will make me talk myself into an apoplexy! *I* never turned away your macaws; and, as to the child, you are only hoping for an excuse to send her out of the house to that Miss Womble, or some place of the sort, where she 'll be half-starved: you've got some new fig in your head, I suppose."

Mrs. Cavendish Jones burst into tears, and then proceeded to hysterics. Mr. Jones rose, rang the bell, and left the room. He had

rung the nursery-bell violently:—down ran Katty—but Mrs. Jones had come to herself; and, having come to herself, and having no one to display before but Katty, she considered a continuance of tears and hysterics a useless extravagance of feeling and sentiment; so she told her to put some eau de Cologne on her pocket-handkerchief, give her "Florence Macarthy" (which was then a new novel), and send for Dr. Darling.

"It's not well you are, Ma'am dear," said the Nurse. Shall I send Miss Julianna to ye?"

"Ay, if you please; but call her Marian, Nurse—it has a sad and mournful sound, more in accordance with her destiny, poor child!—

"'There is a magic in the name of *Marian!*'"

And she threw up her eyes to heaven with unusual energy.

"Och, no magic, plase God, Ma'am!' replied Nurse, running the sign of the cross quickly over her heart with the fore-finger of her right hand. "No magic at all; it's a quiet, blessed, modest name, and came for all the world like music from your lips, Ma'am, so it

did," replied the Nurse, rejoicing exceedingly that there was a chance of her favourite being designated at last by what she called "her natural name."

"Shall I send for the Doctor, Ma'am? or do ye think ye'll be easier in a few minutes?"

"Stay, Nurse, I'll write—give me my implements—I mean, my table, pens, *et cætera*. Really, you are very stupid," she continued, as the mystified Katty looked perplexed at the *et cætera*. "You are very stupid, and only fit for the kitchen; you have been now quite six years in constant communion with me, and yet you have not in the least increased your perceptives or improved in your intellectual qualifications!"

"I'm sorry for it, Mistress, dear!—I'd do anything, sure, in life to plase you, Master, or Miss Marian."

"You must go back to the kitchen, Cook," said Mrs. Jones, laying particular emphasis upon the monosyllable *Cook*, "if you desire to remain in my establishment. Your master (how Heaven ever endowed men with such

devouring propensities I know not!) praises your cookery still, and declares he has never even had a decent ragoût since you went up stairs—in fact, it's a settled point. Miss Marian requires a more polished person about her—some one who can develop the mysterious hallucinations of the young idea—and talk French. There, you may go, and leave me to my epistolary meditations: if I should feel worse (I 'm such a poor, variable, weak creation!), I will strike twice upon the bell—then send for Dr. Darling."

Katty's heart swelled almost to bursting; she tried to speak, but could not articulate a single syllable; she paused on the threshold; Mrs. Jones raised her pale eyes from the velvet-covered desk and the tinted paper that reposed thereon, and said, in her languishing tone—

"Do not remain, Katty; I really have not spirits or strength for your overpowering brogue this morning."

Mrs. Macane shut to the door with more violence than was seemly. Her deep and

earnest affection for her young charge had subjected her for years to as perfect restraint as any unfortunate person ever experienced. She had been a sort of female Proteus—moulding herself into all shapes and fashions to please her capricious lady—and all this for the sake of the poor parentless child, who was in reality more dependent upon her than upon her mistress. When it is remembered that Katty was a woman of strong feelings (which originate strong tempers), and fully capable of earning her living respectably in what she called her "natural station," her sacrifice may be in some degree appreciated. Satisfied from the first that Mrs. Jones's favour was unstable as water, she had never sent the poor foundling down stairs without being chilled by the fear that she might do or say something to offend her patroness. She lived in a state of perpetual watchfulness and terror; she veered with every look, sigh, smile, or frown, which the "Misthress" assumed. "I turned myself," as she said of herself, "into a weathercock to plase her." But when

it was intimated to her, in so abrupt a manner, that Marian required a more polished attendant—that she was to be turned over to the moralities and impertinences of a Frenchwoman—and Katty hated the French with all the hatred of a soldier's wife—and, above all, when her mistress "flung her brougue in her face—she who had often (to be sure it was immediately after the christening) asked her to teach her the Irish that Lady Bab admired so much"—to think that *she* should fly at her about "her tongue"—overpowered poor Katty completely. The sufferings and sacrifices of past years rushed back upon her remembrance—and losing all restraint when she arrived in the nursery, she flung herself on her knees, and, catching her darling nursling to her bosom, she wept loudly: nor was it long till poor Marian, unable to support her nurse's grief, wept with her; though Katty, with much praiseworthy discretion, refused to impart to her the cause of her tears.

The bell did not ring for Dr. Darling; for two or three visiters came in, one of whom

offered to take Mrs. Jones to see a learned pig, which told fortunes in the Strand: and this lucky proposal turned the current of her ideas—so that, in twenty minutes, oblivious of hysterics, her liege-lord's tyranny, Katty Macane, and all sublunary matters, she was rolling towards Charing Cross, in all the glory of a new French bonnet and pelisse. The foundling had sobbed herself to sleep; and, after Katty had watched the departing carriage with anything but a blessing on one of its occupants, her eyes fell upon the sleeping child—tears were still lingering on her cheek, like dew-drops on a rose-leaf. A tall carved and cushioned chair, which, in conformity with the excellent taste that has introduced those beautiful relics of antiquity into our drawing-rooms, ought to have been considered the seat of honour in the house, had been banished to the nursery, and on this Marian had flung herself—in that easy, graceful attitude which few pencils could justly delineate. One dimpled elbow rested on the arm of the chair, half sunk in the deeply-toned crimson velvet which rose

at either side—her white soft fingers were clasped together—her feet drawn up, one falling a little over the front—her head rested on her arm, and a profusion of clustering curls, of the brightest brown, fell over the most exquisitely-moulded throat and shoulders it is possible to conceive—her lips were parted, and the small glittering teeth showed in all perfection, embedded as they were in such deep and glowing red. But if there was a part to dwell on of peculiar beauty, where all was beauty, it was the long lashes of those transparent lids, which shut out for a time the world and its vexations from that sleeping child, doomed as she was to so much certain sorrow—the small blue veins were visible in all their delicate tracery, and the round, full ball beneath, instinct with life and light, seemed hardly sufficiently curtained.

Katty's tears were renewed as she gazed upon her darling, but now she shed them silently; and, seating herself opposite her charge, "crooned" out her perplexities and sufferings in a low, wailing tone—her elbows

placed upon her knees — her long fingers (through which streamed her tears) pressed on either cheek—and her body rocked backwards and forwards, while she murmured on, so as not to disturb the child's repose—

"Constant communion with her for six years," she muttered, reverting to her last conversation with her mistress—"Constant communion with you!—and that's thrue — and thrue, also, that it wasn't the communion of saints, any way, God help us!—No, no! And what I have put up with! Many a time the captain of our company used to say it was more than the Duke himself could do to manage me; and just to think how I managed myself, from first to last, to humour that one, for your sake, you sleeping jewel! 'Increased my'—what?—that was some of her tongue-turnery that neither priest nor friar could English. Brogue, indeed! And she with her London whang, that's as bad and worse than Connaught and Munster put together. 'Polished person!'—Faith, it's polished herself was, with a currycomb, or something of the

sort. Well, give me the downright blood-and-bone quality, that was born to it, and brought up in it from the first, and knew the rights and the wrongs of it from beginning to end, and have no need of airs and turns and twists and whimsies to keep up a station—and to whom a lord and a lady comes natural—and who know their own mind. Yet, sure, it isn't of myself I ought to be thinkin', but of you, ye poor innocent thing! that all my pains and trouble could not make what I wanted. There's a spirit in ye, a-lannan, which I fear and love —a fine bould spirit, that would turn ye into a queen without any trouble—a fine proud spirit flashing from your black eyes with a bravery a blue one never knew, and sounding in the stamp of yer little fut when ye'r too much put upon. And there's a manner about ye, that, above all the manners in the world, the people ye'r with like least—and that's an independent one! And to think of the like o' you being subjected to a Frenchwoman — a mincing, manakin, frog-eating, pinched Frenchwoman, without an atom of flesh on her bones, and full

up to the mouth with ready-made lies—not innocent white ones, but such as would bate a thunder-cloud for blackness. Och, my sorrow! and och, my grief! hard is the bit that's given out of whimsy, and bitter the cup filled by fashionable charity. And I'd rather have you with a natural mother (which, to be sure, poor thing! you never had), in a linsey-woolsey coat, than here, where the heart of the mistress never warmed to you or to anything else. Ah! if the Almighty would but put some Christian trick into my head to chate her into doing the duty she took upon herself by accident like, and not leaving you (as she will) a poor half-and-half creature—fit for neither rich nor poor, meal nor malt; but, somehow, every little turn I ever had in me seems turned out of me, and I'm fit for nothing, God help me! but just to do as I'm bid, which is altogether a new thing. Well, to be sure, after all, to think of it!—if I refuse to go back to the kitchen, why she'll think nothing of sending me to the right-about —and then, my blessing! it's small comfort ye'd have in the house, I'm thinkin'—not that

she's what can be called turned *against* you yet, though, like the tide, she's *on* the turn. If I could only steal the spirit out of ye, and make ye like a glove, why you'd have a better chance. There's no knowing what time may do; and I can only pray for the strength and the wit and the patience."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### MARIAN'S EARLIER TROUBLES.

A FEW days saw Katty back in her old region; a few days more, and Lady Bab's cast-off, mischief-making, lying demoiselle was installed as mistress of Miss Marian's nursery, and keeper of Mrs. Jones's wardrobe.

"You understand, you must arrange these caps, and hats, and all these things, in the newest Parisian fashion," said Mrs. Jones.

"Certainement oui, Madame," replied the girl, in the very worst of bad Neufchatel accents.

"And you must talk nothing but French to Marian."

"*Oui*, Madame; but her French so bad!"

"I suppose so. Blue and lilac you said for this cap?"

"Madame's tint—est si délicat!

"And I am particularly anxious that Miss

Marian should be kept entirely from the kitchen. She wants—a something——"

"*Tournure*," put in the grizette, eyeing herself in the cheval glass at the same time.

"Very likely," said Mrs. Jones, who understood that madame meant ma'am, and monsieur sir, but no other word of the fashionable tongue; "very likely; then make it for her, and a small white satin bonnet, by Monday next, for I intend to take her to the review."

Oui, Madame," said the sapient waiting-maid; thinking to herself, while she curtsied and smiled, "quelle bête!"

"And, Pauline, I am very particular as to morals, and must not have her morality neglected. I wish her, as soon as possible, to learn the Church Catechism in French; so that she may understand her duty in all languages."

"Certainement oui, Madame."

"And even while you are arranging my things, you must always see that she is properly dressed."

"Certainement oui, Madame."

"Katty, her late nurse, tied her sash very badly, which caused me much uncomfortable derangement and apprehension when we had company."

"Quel dommage!" replied Pauline, in a voice of tender sympathy.

"And Miss Marian is a little bit obstinate and passionate; Mr. Jones is always amused when she gets into a passion, and laughs at it; but I cannot laugh. The child is really a cause of intense tenderness and anxiety to me, and—oh, blue and silver is the thing of all others for that turban. She is, as I believe I was saying, strangely attached to that Irish nurse — a feeling she must get rid of, as it makes her vulgar. I shall look to you to manage that. And Lady Bab insinuated you could teach her dancing sufficiently for the present. There! I am quite fatigued now with these directions: but, as Miss Womble says, the care of that dear child is almost too much for my weak nerves. You will not forget the blue and silver," she continued, as the half-milliner, half-servant, half-governess, and

whole impostor, was about to withdraw; "and," she added, as the idea which ought to have been first came last upon her mind, "remember to be strict about her truth—she must always speak the truth."

"Certainement oui, Madame," replied the curtseying grizette, as she closed the door.

It would be grievous, indeed, if our sketch *from the life* prejudiced any of our readers against those well-intentioned, often well-educated, and honourable young women, who, coming from abroad, are frequently well qualified for the task of education; but there are few selections from the mass of human kind that need be made with greater caution than a *French Governess.*

We are perfectly aware that there is hardly any mode of acquiring a foreign language, so as to speak it correctly, but by constant conversation with a *well-educated native.* When such can be obtained, she cannot be too highly prized, or too well treated; but every lady, who has the character and intellect of the rising generation at heart, should protest against

the introduction into her family of a foreign governess, unless well assured as to her previous habits and moral conduct. None but a gentlewoman should educate gentlewomen. A master may come, give his lesson, and depart, and, if he be perfect in his single art, it is all that is required of him; but the individual constantly with children must be, *in every respect*, what you desire those children to become, or your purpose is frustrated by the very means you take to attain it. How often are accomplishments too dearly purchased, and the mind left worse than barren, while the ignorant or careless parents imagine it well cultivated, because they had secured the assistance of a French governess —a woman who spoke *French* well!

Pauline, whom Katty's rude wit denominated "half-and-half," did not speak French well — she spoke a miserable jargon; and the solitary comfort to be deduced from her residence in Mrs. Cavendish Jones's house, arose from the circumstance of her being so occupied with what Mr. Cavendish Jones de-

nominated "his wife's fal lals," that poor little Marian was left a great deal to herself, except when called down to be admired by company.

Marian had attained her ninth year; her firmness, strengthened by bad management, had grown into obstinacy, and her imagination, left to run wild, regaled, in her solitary hours (of which she had many), upon the wild old tales of fairies, and giants, and murders, with which Katty had filled her ears in her early infancy. Mrs. Jones had gone on cooling towards the once-cherished idol of her fancy, and, indeed, had it not been for Katty Macane's most extraordinary skill in the culinary department, she would have been sent away long before; for her steady, yet carefully manifested attachment to the Foundling was a perpetual reproach to Mrs. Jones, which that variable lady did not at all like. Marian had learnt that she was not "her mama's *own child;*" and this cruel knowledge, imparted by the *soubrette,* weighing heavily on her little heart, caused her to magnify every slight, and

feel most acutely the least unkindness. Pauline's attentions had kept pace with her mistress's feelings—if such they could be called—caprices were a better term; and whatever occurred to displease or annoy Mrs. Jones, was dexterously laid to the charge of the unfortunate *protegée*. Her beauty now was seldom commented on, her worn-out frocks were grudgingly replaced, her hair was never dressed except by herself, the joyousness of her look had sunk into a serious, if not a sullen expression of countenance. She had learnt to modulate her voice, and be sparing of her words. Occasionally might be heard the tune of an Irish melody, but it sounded more like the lament of a pining bird than the note of one who, upon leaving its nest, uses its first acknowledged strength in a song of thankfulness to Heaven.

Mr. Jones, with the exception of Katty, was the only one in the house who did not utterly neglect the once-fondled girl. Whenever he dined at home, he called for Marian as

soon as the dessert was placed upon the table, then filled her out a bumper of wine with his own hand.

"You are as kind to Marian," said his wife, before the child one afternoon, peevishly, "as if she were your own."

Marian's little heart swelled, and her chest heaved, and turning suddenly round to the kind-hearted man, she hid her face on his shoulder, and burst into tears, exclaiming, between her half-stifled sobs, "I wish he was my own papa—I wish he was!"

"I dare say you do; you are cunning enough for that, or anything else," said the cold-hearted woman.

"Do not cry, my dear, do not cry; here is a bunch of grapes for you, and an orange—hold up your frock—here, eat this Naples' biscuit. What, not eat! Oh, the child must be ill! We must send for Dr. Darling!"

"No, Papa—I may still call you Papa"—she said, looking, with her tearful eyes, into his face, "I am not ill, indeed I am not! but I'm very unhappy! No one seems to love me!"

"Stuff and affectation!" said Mrs. Jones.

"I don't think it is affectation," replied Mr. Jones, wiping off the child's tears with his snuffy pocket-handkerchief, which made her sneeze. "I don't think it is affectation; though, to be sure, she *has* lived nine years with you, my dear!"

"Thank you, Sir. And ends, as is generally the case, by turning my husband against me. Oh, dear!"

"Now do not go into hysterics!" exclaimed Mr. Jones. "Go up-stairs, my dear Marian, and, if you like, call your own Katty; that Mamselle is breaking your heart, I see—losing flesh every day!—Now, my dear Mrs. Jones, that Marian is gone, will you be reasonable, and tell me——"

"No, Sir! I will not; Who ever expected a woman, situated as I am, to be reasonable, while, day after day, you make a point of flying in my face?"

"I fly in your face?"

"Yes; you know you do. You *will* have that child in every day after dinner."

"Me! Why the child, my dear, was your own fancy. I had nothing to do with the child."

"I am not quite sure of that, Mr. Jones; it is not natural for a man to be so very fond of any child that is not his own; and, as Lady Bab says——"

"Curse Lady Bab!" exclaimed the angry Jones, placing both his hands on the table, and by that means pushing his chair and himself from it. "I must and will insist upon your giving up the company of old darned bluestockings," he continued. "We shall figure in a book one of these days—a book which no one would read but for the sake of the scandal—and be shown up, with all our follies and absurdities, for the amusement of an enlightened public! I'm quite of Tom Davis's opinion, that this sort of people, both men and women, are only fit to be looked at, not spoken to."

"Tom Davis," repeated Mrs. Cavendish, in a contemptuous tone of voice, "is a fool."

"A fool!—You are certainly very compli-

mentary to my friends. A fool, indeed! I do not think that any man in England, worth seventy-five thousand pounds, is likely to be considered a fool."

"Psha!" exclaimed the lady.

Married men will bear being argued with, contradicted, and even abused, better than being either laughed at or psha'd at by their wives.

The face of Mr. Cavendish Jones grew red, and more red, until it very much resembled a face covered with damp scarlet cloth: moreover, he kicked the dog, his own dear pet dog, Waddle; and there is no knowing what he might have said, had not Mrs. Cavendish Jones risen from the table, and walked, with as much dignity as her lanky person could assume, to the door—not that she was stimulated to this exertion by any particular desire for, or love of, peace, but she fancied she heard the sound of her shoemaker's voice in the hall, and she had been all the afternoon in a state of rather nervous excitement touching the sandaling of a pair of pale pink satin slip-

pers, so that she could not rest without satisfying herself whether the shoes were or were not arrived. She looked into the hall—but, no, it was only the footman exchanging sentences with the newsman. Mrs. Cavendish Jones, therefore, re-closed the door, and, turning to the still-enraged partner of her disaffections, said,

"The fact is, Mr. Jones, the child has been nothing but a source of misery ever since she entered the house—you know that."

"I know no such thing," replied the master—so called—of the mansion; "I know no such thing. The child has been, by many degrees, the least objectionable of your favourites. *I like the child*—a little, affectionate, spirited creature!"

"Spirited enough!" said the lady. "I am sure Pauline is more than woman to bear with her; but, though she does, I cannot. My humanity——"

"Stuff!" muttered the husband.

The lady paused, looked indignant, but

continued—" My humanity, philanthropy, charity, and sympathetic ingredients, have been called unceasingly into action during the nine years she has resided here—in short, Darling says that my nervous system is in a perpetual state of excitement."

" So it has been ever since I knew you."

" But he says it has fearfully increased."

" So all bad habits do, as we grow old. Why, there's Tom Davis——"

" Don't mention the monster to me!—Don't, Mr. Jones!—Now don't! A creature without sentiment, sympathy, or romance!"

" Romance! Romance in a soap-boiler! that *is* expecting rather too much," said Mr. Jones, laughing; " but pray come to your point at once: what do you wish to do with this poor child—turn her out of doors, or send her to the workhouse?"

" There are some would do so," said the advocate for sentiment, sympathy, and romance, without any emotion; " but I do not wish to do that—my nerves and principles would not permit it. No! the child is clever, and if pro-

perly managed would, I dare say, be useful to me, and to herself by-and-by."

Mr. Cavendish Jones knit his brows, determined to look firm and terrible—a distinction a fat red face never arrived at yet; so he only looked extraordinary. He succeeded, however, in making his wife hold her tongue for a moment, while he gave vent to much honest English feeling. "I'll tell you what, Betsey Jones; there's a cursed deal of false sentiment and false charity afloat in this country, and it's what I call a devilish bad floating capital. You took that child into the house from the same motive that made you pick, or caused to be picked, a mangy puppy dog out of the Serpentine the last morning of the grand review in Hyde-Park—to cause a sensation; and now that you are tired of her—now that, perhaps, she's not quite so pretty to look upon, as she was a year ago—now that you find her a charge instead of a fancy—you think you may turn her out of doors with as little ceremony as a poor relation! Now, no words! I speak once, and I speak for all: it would have been more humane to have sent the infant to the workhouse than,

after rearing it with all tenderness to its present age, to turn it adrift upon a heartless world! What do you mean to make of the girl? Now answer; answer me without sobs or hysterics; I speak once, and I speak for all: What—do—you—mean—to—make—of—the—girl?"

No wonder Mrs. Jones was frightened—no wonder she sank down upon a chair! never in the course of her entire wedded life had she heard her husband make so long a speech; he repeated the question, pausing between each syllable, so as to increase the effect: "What — do— you—mean — to—make—of—the—girl?"

Mrs. Cavendish looked absolutely aghast; she appeared to be making up her mind as to which was most likely to be successful—a fit of passion, or a fit of hysterics.

"Why—I—nothing!" at last murmured the lady.

"By the Lord, I thought so!" he replied, half chuckling at his own singularly well developed ideas upon the subject. "What are ye all but a bundle of nothings, kickshaws, gimcracks, without a rational idea or an ounce of sense?

Pretension, pretension, nothing else! but do what you please, I am resolved that poor helpless girl *shall not* be deserted! yes, Madam, I say *shall not!* she is a human being with a soul, and shall not be thrown on the world while I have a house, or a shilling!"

And Mr. Cavendish Jones struck the table with his clenched hand, and the glasses rang their echoes to his bravery! indeed, when he had finished he seemed a little astonished at his own determination and eloquence. Nothing certainly could have inspired it but the interest he felt in the orphan child. Jones's oratory had taken his lady so completely by surprise, that, as we have intimated, she did not know exactly what to say, and she had tact enough to perceive that hysterics would not exactly do. Whether she cherished any jealous surmises or not, in reality, I cannot say; but jealousy is a capital stronghold for a discontented wife—an excellent subjet to fall back upon—a sort of backbone to a domestic quarrel, which will support either party on an emergency; and accordingly Mrs. Cavendish Jones exclaimed that now

indeed she saw Lady Bab was right, that she needed no farther proof to open her eyes, that it was a combination between him and his cook; but that she would be no longer duped —that she would expose him: and, once having laid the corner-stone, she progressed with astonishing rapidity, convincing herself, by her own arguments, that she was a much-injured woman—that her husband was a base deceiver, no better than he ought to be—and that she had been the betrayed, innocent, and unhappy victim. To think of her fostering with care and tenderness the child of his iniquity!—to think of her charity, benevolence, sympathy, tenderness, gentleness, long-suffering, and womanly love, having been so imposed upon! But she saw it all: he might do or say what he pleased; but Marian and Katty should quit the house, or she would not remain in it—that was certain. Never had he evinced such interest before for any living thing; and why should he now, if it was not as she said? But she had been blind—infatuated by charity and a combination of Christian virtues.

Mr. Cavendish Jones, exhausted by his own wordy exertions, became exceedingly perplexed as this torrent of wrongs and accusations poured upon him. He pushed himself still farther from the table, extended his cheeks with sundry mouthfuls of air, and at last gulped down another bumper of claret; but he failed in following up his advantage, though happily his resolve respecting the orphan did not fail—he was steady on that point. And, half from an inaptness to exertion, half from a knowledge of the perfect inutility of contending with such a storm, he began whistling a sort of running accompaniment to her frenzy, which ended in a fit of real hysterics; though none of the persons officiating with burnt feathers, vinegar, sal volatile, or ammonia, in the least believed in their veritable existence.

At last Dr. Darling was sent for; and, with his usual blandness, he temporized, prescribed, smiled, sighed, exactly as he ought, and left the household, as he always did, on better terms with themselves, and consequently delighted with him—promising to return in the

evening, which he did, and not till then was he made acquainted with the exact position of affairs.

Mrs. Cavendish Jones was inexorable: she resolved to make her husband smart for his brief assumption of authority. He had missed after-dinner sleep, and was altogether very uncomfortable. It was in vain he declared his innocence: Mrs. Cavendish talked of a separate maintenance; and Dr. Darling, who had the misfortune to be considered a friend as well as a physician by his patients, mediated between them—stepping daintily from room to room—"dear Sir-ing" the one, and "dear Madam-ing" the other, until his time and patience becoming nearly exhausted, he hastened, with all the combined powers of suavity and eloquence, a cessation of hostilities; a *termination* —a final termination—he had too much knowledge of the party and too much good sense to anticipate: the quarrels of fools know no end.

"Still, Doctor," said, or rather murmured, the lady, for she had descended to pianissimo —"Still, Doctor, the child must go; let her be

placed with Miss Womble. Even supposing, for a moment, that Cavendish states truly, still, after such an event, my nerves—really, my nerves—could not bear to see one, who, with the fates, however unconsciously, seems leagued against my peace. A little time will restore what you so prettily term 'my amiable equanimity.'"

"Well," said the Doctor, "I promise you, on my friend Jones's part, the child shall be sent to school; but Miss Womble—a very proper person, I dare say, very—but I think, perhaps, a more fitting school might be found for—I think you call her Marian now? She really does you credit, my dear Madam—a sweet child!"

"She *was* very pretty, Doctor; but you are so kind, you think every one pretty. These dreadful hysterics tear my poor face to pieces."

"Never saw you look more lovely in my life, my dear Madam—never; and you must permit me to say that you ought not to yield for a moment to those jealous—I really must call them—fancies. I will tell you what—whenever

a doubt of my good friend Jones enters your pretty head, do me the favour just to look in the glass."

"La, Doctor!" said the patient, languishingly, "you are such a flatterer; you really are a most desperate flatterer!"

"Pardon me, truth is not flattery; and as to the school—"

Dr. Darling was a kind and humane man, though a highly-varnished one; and though he habitually got through as much nonsense, in the twelve or fourteen hours during which he visited as many ill or fanciful patients as the west-end district could furnish, still his heart was tender and his intellect clear; consequently, he had a well-founded dislike to Miss Womble. But Mrs. Cavendish Jones was inexorable on that point: she was her friend; and she could not with propriety place the child anywhere else.

"Still, my dear Madam," persisted the Doctor, "I want you to rise superior to all these petty annoyances, and display your clemency."

"Well, my good Sir, have I not consented

to say no more about it?—though, remember *I am not* convinced; for Lady Bab——"

"My dear friend, pray consult your own excellent judgment, and do not mind Lady Bab. I assure you, I think your judgment quite as good as hers."

"Oh, Dr. Darling!"

"I do, upon my honour—if not better; but the cook, Katty—what in the world could Cavendish do without his cook?"

But Mrs. Cavendish Jones was ignorant of the wisdom which teaches to yield a weak point to gain a strong one: an admirable bit of wisdom in matrimonial as well as in all other matters; but she knew it not. She fought for victory—not for the advantage that would arise to either party by conquest or defeat; and, perceiving she had gained a point—knowing also her husband's weakness—she remained firm, and Katty's dismissal was a settled matter.

"Poor Katty—pauvre femme!" exclaimed Lizette to the enraged cook, as she was carving the servants' dinner for the last time. "I pity

you ver moche, Madame Macane; you vill not find so goot place easy, nor" (she added, with a grin) "soche kind master. I'm glad that little diable is going to school, as now ve vill have coomfort, and the house to ourselves, Simon." And this was addressed to the footman.

"What's that you called Miss Marian?" said Katty, her eyes flashing fire as she spoke.

"Nosing, Mistress Macane—nosing bad: Mischief—a pet name."

"Well for you; but for all that, Miss Frog, I'll tell you my mind; and mind that you walk up stairs and tell the Mistress every word I say, which I'll be for ever thankful to ye to do, as it 'll save me the trouble of repating it to herself; and which, to be sure, I need give myself no concarn about, as you'll be sure to do so whether or not. Tell her, then, for Katty Macane, that, in the regiment I belonged to, there was a female dog—and it was a briling morning; I mind it well—the poor thing had pups; and the sarjent-major took the pups away from her, and drowned them intirely out

of her sight; and it was right he done (he was a knowledgeable man), for we wor on the march, and the craythur of a dog would have been kilt with the pups. Well, we come to a halt, and tented as usual; and there had been a Spanish hut (it was in Spain, so, in coorse, the hut was Spanish)—a Spanish hut burned down by thim rascally French hard by——"

"Madame," interrupted the *soubrette*, "you do not mean to insult my contreemen?"

"I mean to say they were cowardly scamps," said Katty; "burning and destroying all before them, without judge or jury, or letter or license."

"Brave soldats!" muttered Ma'mselle, with an air of satisfaction.

"I don't say but what some of 'em is brave," replied the cook; "but we bate 'em—you can't Frenchify *that*, anyhow—we bate 'em. Only, as I was saying—Bess (that was the dog's name) goes mooching and mooching among the ruins of the hut, that had only been burnt down the night afore. Well, I was sit-

ting hard by, and the sun setting, and I trying to bile my little kettle to make a drop of tay for Mike: if he was in a humane humour, he'd rather have the tay than the brandy (bad luck to it!), which he didn't like by any manes as well as the whisky (God be good to him!). Well, 'Come here, Bess,' says I; but sorra a fut Bess would come, but kept mooching and tooting like a mole. She was a little, broad, thick dog, remarkable active; and so, at last, the curosity led me, and I went over to her, and I see, in the ruins of that hut, what I never forgot. A large craythur of a dog had, I perceived from the way the half-burnt remains of her was placed, laid herself over her pups, and remained till she was burnt alive trying to save them; and dead they war altogether—the mother and her young—barrin' one, which I suppose must have rowled over, and fell into a sort of cellar, about three feet deep; and I could see it underneath, crawling a little, as if the life was only half in it, and every now-and-then it would let a sharp yelp of a cry out of it, which went straight to poor Bessy's heart,

and then she'd tare like mad with the fair good-nature to get at the pup. So I moved a great flag, that was a sort of arch to the place, and down she darted like an arrow; and then, poor thing, she cocht up the pup in her mouth, but it was too heavy for her to get out with: the pup was a good lump of a pup, and she was little. So with that she stands upon her hind-legs, like a Christian, with the pup in her mouth, and I took a grip of the pup and pulled it up, and Bess jumpt out, took it in her mouth, and carried it to the edge of the camp, where I was biling the kettle, and lay down and acted the mother to that poor desolate pup, as if it had been her own; and though my Mike was raythur of a hard man, yet the tears stud in his eyes like diamonds whin he saw the kindly natur of that dumb beast; and many of the soldiers, when they heard it, swore that Bess should have her own way and carry the pup, or that they would carry it for her, or make a place for it on the baggage-waggon, where she could folly her own fancy. Well, sure enough, nothing could go beyant the love

of that craythur for the pup; and, God bless us! 'twasn't out of whimsy she fancied it, but from pure natur—and an ugly baste it was—but, to be sure, *she* didn't think so. Well, as luck would have it, we had hard marching, and sometimes we hadn't room for even poor Bess on the waggon, and we'd offer to carry the pup—but, no!—she undertook, you see, Ma'mselle, to do her duty; and so she'd never lose sight of it through no timptation. But even the comfort poor Bess had wasn't to last. We come up with the innemy, though I niver in all my born days see people that had better use of their legs than the Frinch: they war illigant at walkin' off. Still, we come up with them; and, to be sure, as usual, the few women there war and the baggage war left in the rear. But Bess was a true-born soldier, poor thing, being used all her life to campagining; and, whin all came to all, she stole after the men; nothing could keep her quiet afther the first revillie—she was away with the pup. Well, I don't mean anything hurting to your feelings, in particular, Ma'mselle; but,

in coorse, we gave them rason to pay attintion, respect, and obadience to ould England: we argufied them into obadience by a way we had; though there war many wet eyes and heavy hearts, in spite of the glory. Well, God forgive me! that day, though my own poor Mike, and many a boy I had a regard for, war in it, my heart often turned to poor Bess and the pup, and I wished I had lockt her up in one of the baggage-chests, which was the only way in the world we ever had of *putting past* her what she took in her head. Well, the thundering and the roaring and the murdering came to an ind before night—for it wasn't to say an out-and-out battle, only a running *scrimmage* like; and, whin it was over, I was glad to see all those (barrin' the dog) I regarded safe. And, indeed, if it had been a child, there couldn't have been more huntin' after it than there was after Bess. Poor Bess! it wasn't that she ever got into the thick of the fight—oh, no! she always outskirted it, clever and knowledgeable enough. But, any way, we had got our wounded seen to and the dead

buried, and still no sign of the pet of the regiment. Mike and myself thought we'd have a *batther* * afther her, and set off with the moon, and it wasn't very long till we found her."

Katty paused, as if the remembrance was too much for her: she felt ashamed of the emotion, and endeavoured to account for it.

"It wasn't, ye see, so much *the dog* that we cared for—because, to be sure, she was but a dog—but the *natur*, the beautiful natur, went beyant all. When we looked at the poor thing we thought it was all up with her: she was lying her length on a piece of ground that was a good deal shook up with the balls; her fore-paw hanging by a bit of skin, and the other put over the pup, as a mother puts her arm over her infant to draw it closer to her bosom. The pup was quite dead and mangled, yet still that poor, fond, dumb craythur kept a grip of it with the one paw, close up to herself. 'Bess,' says my husband—for, to tell God's truth, I was a bigger fool then than I am now—for I could not spake—thinking, do you understand

* Hunt; "on the batther"—on the look-out.

me, of the *natur*, the *beautiful natur*, the Almighty puts into the creation, and how some people haven't as much in them as poor animals.—'Bess,' says he—and the craythur rose up on the three legs, but couldn't stand with the wakeness, and never a move she moved her tail, but licked Mike's hands. 'Don't ye see the pup's dead, Bess?' says he; but she'd hardly let him have it. 'It's stone-dead,' says he to me; 'but I see no hurt on the dog barrin' the leg, and many a Christian lives without a leg, and why shouldn't she?' He figs up a hole with his bagnett, and lays the pup in it; Bess layin' by watching all the time. 'Cheer up, ould comrade,' he says to her, 'you did yer duty by it;' and with that she dragged herself over and looked into the hole; and, when she had satisfied herself with looking, she turned up her head to the moon that was shining at its beautiful full, like an angel's face, in the heavens, and sent up a howl—the most pitiful howl I ever heard. And my husband covered up the pup, and took Bess in his arms: she howled no more, poor thing, but

seemed to understand the last was done: and though she *was* but a dog, still she had the respect of the regiment till the day of her death, because of her faithfulness to the charge she undertook.

"And if you can carry that story, Ma'mselle, as well as you've done many another, to the Misthress, in yer fine fancy head, and tell it to her as I've tould it to you, may-be she might pick a moral out of it that would do her no harm."

## CHAPTER IX.

### MARIAN'S DEPARTURE FROM HER FIRST "HOME."

THERE are exceptions to every rule; and when the number of female seminaries, establishments, academies, and, for aught we know to the contrary, colleges, that swarm in every suburb and in every town throughout England, are taken into consideration, it is a blessed thing that there are exceptions to the rule, that female schools are, in nine cases out of ten, public evils which ought to be put down by act of Parliament, as injurious to the health, intellect, and morals of Englishwomen. The higher classes of society, to whom money is no object, have become so fully aware of this fact, that it is a rare thing to meet an "Honourable," or a "Lady," at even what are considered first-rate establishments. The nobility

endeavour to educate their children at home, and so in some degree preserve them from the contamination which it is next to impossible to avoid where a number of young people are constantly congregated together. The mind is more liable to contract disease than the body; and many are the instances where one vicious girl has contaminated an entire school.

No governess, however intelligent and upright, can be an Argus; and, even if she were, she might be baffled by a school-girl of fourteen or fifteen; particularly if that school-girl had been previously initiated into the regular routine of tricks, falsehood, and meanness, which are—we had almost written—*invariably* acquired in preparatory schools.

The middle classes, who cannot afford the expense of a governess, and cannot pay a high price for the education of their children, commit them to the tender mercies of some half-educated and weakly-principled woman, who engages to teach them all manner of trumpery accomplishments for a sum inadequate to supply the unlucky child with whole-

some and sufficient food. The teacher practises all sorts and descriptions of meanness, to make the most of a little; and the girl, meeting her cunning with cunning, tries, as it is elegantly termed, "to be up to the governess;" which means, to become a greater adept in deception than her instructress. Although our censure is meant to be general, we have said, and say, there are exceptions. We have known two or three gentlewomen—one in particular, a widow—who, well qualified for the task, brought into her limited establishment the feelings and habits belonging exclusively to the well-educated, and the benevolence and affection which is to be found in all classes throughout England. She commenced a preparatory school with a heart full of kindness—resolved to do her duty—to treat the children as her own—to follow her own plans—to give but few lessons to the very young—to attend to the health and recreation of the body—well knowing that an overloaded youth grows weak, not strong, with advancing years.

Her pupils loved her more than pupils in general love their teachers, because "school" is usually held out as a threat to "naughty girls:" but their sapient "Pa's and Ma's" discovered that Mrs. Tidmarsh took them for one-pound-five a quarter less; that Mrs. Bushwell made them learn double the quantity of lessons; and Miss Grumply charged "French in;" and one preferred Mrs. Lavely for giving her cousin's little girl three hours at the piano, though she was but seven years old. To be sure, Kitty *was* a little out at one shoulder; but her governess said it would soon come round again, and made her hold the back-board, and stand in the stocks "wonderful!" And so the lady's pupils were removed from her mild and gentle care; their hours for recreation curtailed; some obliged to live upon Mrs. Tidmarsh's hard dumplins—where the maxim, "those who eat most pudding shall have most meat," was rigidly enforced—or doomed to Mrs. Bushwell's *unexplained* lessons; or the vile pronunciation of Miss Grumply's Cockney French teacher; or the

narrow and cruel tortures of Mrs. Lavely's "strict establishment."

"God preserve our girls," ought to be the English parent's prayer, until a totally different system of female education is established among us! The mania that possesses many rational persons in middle life, to send their young daughters from their comfortable homes to a third or fourth-rate starving and perverting academy, that they may imbibe a little bad French and a little tuneless music, which is of no earthly use afterwards, is truly a matter for marvel; still more wonderful is it that in these "reforming days" the legislature does not enact some law by which persons should be examined, to ascertain if they are in every way qualified for the task of instruction, before they are permitted to open schools.*

* It may be necessary to observe that this work was written and in the hands of the publisher upwards of a year ago. Mr. Dickens has since directed public attention to the "system," which too frequently ruins both mind and body, at ill-conducted schools; and, in so doing, has performed a duty for which humanity is his debtor. Although I do not believe

Good day-schools, conducted by approved persons, throughout the Provinces, could be made the organs of an improved, rational, and, in a moderate degree, ornamental, system of female education for the middle-classes; and such an arrangement would permit a young girl to spend part of every day in the enjoyments and delights of home. There is a sort of uprooting the affections in the act of taking a girl from her domestic hearth for six months, upon which it is most painful to think! Home is woman's sphere. She ought to be the sun that warms, cheers, and invigorates, all within that blessed circle. The mother should be especially so; and, in educating her daughters, never lose sight of the principle, that to make home happy is a privilege of which our sex should be more proud than of all the distinctions which wealth and rank can bestow. But, unless this story

that atrocities equal to those he describes are common at "Young Ladies' Establishments," I know full well that if parents were made aware of the manner in which they are frequently conducted, they would be less numerous and far less prosperous.

proceeds, it will be converted into an "Essay on Female Education," a work, by the way, for which, one day or other, we may perhaps venture to ask the sanction of our readers. We love our own sex too dearly—are too fond of their natural virtues—too proud of their good name—to see them trifle away their existence, without raising our voice, however feeble it may be, against the ill-employment of much virtue, and the perversion of much talent and much time.

It was a drizzling cold day in January when Marian Winter entered the comfortless schoolroom of Miss Arabella Womble. She had completed, as was supposed, her ninth year. Fortunately, Pauline, Lady Bab's discarded servant, had paid her but little attention; she was, therefore, less contaminated than might have been expected. Marian possessed sufficient activity to amuse herself, and, moreover, her mind dwelt a great deal upon the romantic tales her nurse had told her in her very early childhood. She had acquired a fluent but incorrect method of speaking French;

her ear was so quick that she played all the popular airs, with spirit and truth, though she hardly knew her notes. She danced like a sylph; and though some years had been added to her mental age by sorrow, still her spirit, her high and wilful spirit, was unbroken — unbent! She knew nothing of geography, nor arithmetic, nor history; though she had read many of Shakspeare's plays, and could repeat long poems, which, with her temperament and imagination, she ought never to have learnt. Especial care should have been taken to make her rational: her education, if so it could be called, had almost rendered her absurd. She bade Mrs. Cavendish Jones farewell with an immovable countenance; she walked into all the up-stair rooms, and looked round her, without shedding a single tear; and then took her way to a little room, called by Mr. Jones "his own;" by his wife, "the Library." The man of the house was leaning back, in a stuffed, cushioned chair, reading the paper; the only thing he ever did read.

"I am come to bid you good-bye, Sir," said

the foundling, in a low and choking voice; "to bid you good-bye, and to thank you for all your goodness to me."

"Eh, its raining, Lolly! but I suppose there is a coach?"

"Madame said Miss valk, as her trunk vas gone," said Pauline, who had received her mistress's directions to "watch what her master said to that artful child."

"She can't walk in the rain! Go for a coach yourself, or send Robert; and shut the door. Shut the door, I say!" was Mr. Jones's order.

"I am afraid, Lolly, you have not been as affectionate to Mrs. Jones as you ought to be."

"She would not let me love her, Sir; nor call her Mamma, as she used. I have had nobody to love lately: my love is not worth having. There is no one in the world to love me, now Katty is gone;" and pent-up tears burst from her eyes.

"Don't cry, Lolly; indeed I love you very much, and Mrs. Jones, I dare say—Well, we

will not say anything about her, but I will take care you want for nothing; and mind your lessons, and tell the truth, and learn the 'Battle of Prague.' I shall expect to hear you play *that* at Midsummer. And pay attention to all that's told you; and if you have not enough to eat, just tell me, that's all. Now, don't cry! I'll give you—look here—a guinea! a golden guinea! There, put it up," added the weak, kind-hearted man; for he heard his wife's step outside the door, and, like the grumbling of Mount Vesuvius, it was always the presage of a coming eruption: and come it did. The lady entered the room, and threw herself into a chair with a sort of incipient violence, and, without noticing the child, who had thrust the guinea into her bosom, assured her husband "he was destroying their dependent by his absurdity. Why could she not walk? People must learn to walk. No one would keep a carriage for a foundling. She had been a most fortunate girl, and it was a point of duty to tell her so. She must make the most of her time at school—learn all she

could. God might soon take her friends from her, and, even if He did not, she could not expect them to do and do for ever. She was neither sugar nor salt, and would not melt, and she ought not to have objected to walk."

"I did not object, Ma'am," interrupted little Mary.

"There, Mr. Jones!" exclaimed the lady, in anger; "there is the fruit of your over-indulgence: teaching her to fly in my face the very moment she is leaving my house. Oh, you little vixen, Miss Womble will get the spirit out of you!"

"Coach at the door, Sir," said the servant, entering.

"It is not wanted," replied Mrs. Jones.

"Beg pardon, Ma'am, but it's a-pouring cats and dogs," said the footman; "and Mam'selle said she'd catch her death if it's a be that she went out in the damp."

"Oh, Pauline — true! Well, there, go child, go! Good-bye! What do you stand there for?"

"I'd rather walk, Ma'am," said the child.

"*You'd* rather! Well, I do declare!"

"Go, Lolly, go," interposed Mr. Jones, kindly anxious to avoid words: "Go, Lolly!"

Marian threw her arms round his neck, and burst into so violent a fit of crying that she was carried by the footman to the coach in a state of insensibility.

"Little heartless thing!" muttered Mrs. Cavendish Jones, as she pressed a pug puppy to her bosom, the last and ugliest of her pets.

## CHAPTER X.

### MARIAN AT SCHOOL.

"Miss is in sulk," said the French woman to the teacher, at the school-room door, "but she get out of dem agin."

"Are you sulky, little girl?" inquired the fag of the school, in a voice which constant insult had ground into a whisper, so that "Miss Kitty" never spoke loud enough to be heard across the room.

"I don't know."

"Then go and sit down; there are not many girls returned yet, so you may have your sulks to yourself," continued the withered teacher, as she pressed her hard iron fingers into the soft dimpled hand of the foundling.

No one, to have looked on the remnant of mortality, would have imagined she was that lovely, beloved, and tender thing, called woman. Her features were pinched together

from the constant habit of controlling her feelings, so that her mouth had acquired a rigidity of muscle which rendered it almost immovable; her hair, thinned by premature old age, was streaked with grey, frizzed out into two curls on either side her temples, twisted into a knot behind, and fastened by a horn comb; her complexion was soddened; her eyes, dimmed by late watchings and early risings. Her brow was the reverse of Miss Womble's; it was expanded and full, indicating an observant, if not a very comprehensive, mind. Bred up to be a teacher, she had never heard the voice of sympathy and affection since her mother, rising her dying head, with a last effort, from her pillow, said, "God help you, my poor Kate! I leave you penny-less, in a cold, heartless world."

The succeeding years of poor Kate's life proved the strength of that mother's observation. No mere school-girl ever dreamed of loving a teacher; and, had one of Miss Womble's pupils committed such an indiscretion, she would have been prevented from repeating it

by the governess's jealousy—she being firmly resolved that her teacher should be her slave, and that nothing should ameliorate her condition. It is not to be wondered at that fifteen years of such discipline should have turned the milk of human kindness in this bereaved woman's bosom into gall and bitterness, or that she vented that bitterness in sundry acts of petty tyranny upon the little ones, who certainly aided Miss Womble in tormenting "the teacher." Miss Kitty held Marian's soft hand within her's, and led her into that desolate school-room, without one feeling of pity for the tears which rolled down her cheeks, or one sympathising thought as to the sufferings she must undergo. A single shovel-full of coals was burning in the grate, which was walled in by a high green wire fender, and it must be confessed the bars were much brighter than the fire; the floor was destitute of carpet, the windows of curtains or drapery; two long, narrow, deal tables, were fixed in the middle of the room, and equally long deal forms, narrow and hard, flanked either side; on the table

were piled sundry slates, boxes, and heaps of school-books; there was a reclining board behind the door, two pair of stocks, and two or three back boards; the floor was mottled with spots of ink, and the table had sundry marks expressive of the propensity which young ladies, as well as young gentlemen, sometimes have of writing and drawing in wrong places.

Over the chimney-piece, in a square black frame, were several rules and regulations, fines and maxims, all very good, taken separately, but, like most maxims, unfit for general society or general use. Indeed, it would have been impossible to select or arrange an apartment more completely at variance with every idea of comfort and home than that which Miss Womble ostentatiously designated in her advertisements, a "spacious and lofty school-room."

Miss Kitty left Marian standing in the middle of this cheerless apartment, desiring her to sit down. The poor child looked timidly round; it was evident, even to her, that but

few of the pupils had yet arrived. One, however, was sitting upon her trunk, which had not yet been carried up stairs, crying very bitterly; two others (Indians) were standing over a basket filled with winter fruits and cakes, which they were dividing and devouring much to their own satisfaction; a fourth, a lanky girl, was seated, in a sort of half-melancholy, abstracted mood, looking at the fire she dared not approach, her long nose and long fingers being admirably matched, in a red, purply tint, denoting extreme cold. Mary glanced round on her companions, but, meeting no returning glance, did what strangers always do in a strange house, she walked up close to the fire-place.

"Musn't go there," said the long girl; "read the rules—'Every young lady placing her hands on the fender to pay one penny to the poor box, and learn an additional column of French spelling.'"

Mary moved to sit in a comfortable easy chair, which I forgot to enumerate in my cata-

logue of the school furniture, and which stood in solitary dignity between the windows.

"Musn't sit there, that's the governess's chair. Read the rules," persisted the purple young lady—"'The pupils to keep their regular seats except when in the stocks, on the reclining board, or in class; any young lady taking other than her proper seat to pay a penny to the poor-box, and do one extra sum in arithmetic.'"

"But I have no seat yet," remonstrated Marian.

"Do as you like," replied the long young lady; "only, no one ever sits in that chair, except the governess, or Kats!"

"Cats!" echoed Marian.

"Yes, Kats," repeated the thin girl. "We always call Miss Kitty, Kats, she's so cross. Mind, little one, you don't tell. I've been here five years, and mum's our word!"

"Mum!" said the perplexed novice.

"Yes, mum; that's our word. Why, you little stupid, mum means hold your tongue."

Marian made no reply.

"What's your name, little one?" persisted Miss Kemp.

"Marian Winter."

"Have you ever been at school before?"

"Never."

"Poor child! I dare say you were very sorry to leave Pa' and Ma', and brothers and sisters?"

"I have none."

"Oh, dear!—How odd! No Pa' or Ma', or brothers or sisters. Well, perhaps you're better off; they torment one sadly. Brothers—particularly brothers. Do you come as a boarder or half-boarder?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, as a boarder, I suppose; you are too little for a half. However, we shall soon know."

Although Mary did not understand the difference, she innocently inquired "How!"

"Oh," replied her informant, laughing, "because pupils—whole pupils—get bread and butter, halfs, get bread and scrape."

Marian was again at fault, but she did not feel inclined to prolong the conversation with

a companion who continued humming a tune, and knocking first one heel and then the other against the ground, to mark the time and keep her feet from freezing.

Miss Kemp (that was the thin young lady's name) was, as Miss Womble elegantly expressed it, "the crack music pupil of the school"—foremost rattler at the ill-used piano, and still more ill-used harp, whose very strings murmured terror and dismay at the approach of Miss Kemp's footstep; and when, with a triumphant air, she threw up the lid of the one, and drew, or rather hauled, the other towards her, it was acknowledged by all who had a feeling of sympathy with the suffering instrument, that great must be its tortures, past, present, and to come; nevertheless she had all the elements of a great performer, if they had been properly developed.

Marian continued sitting and shivering on the narrow form, as, one by one, the different pupils entered—for Miss Womble's school had degenerated, since our first introduction to her, into quite a preparatory school, on an extended scale. She was most anxious it should be be-

lieved that this was her own choice, and also that all the children belonged to the "upper classes." Accordingly, the butcher who supplied her school-table with indifferent meat, exchanged his beef and mutton for a certain portion of polite education bestowed upon his daughter, but the governess always designated him as a "provision merchant in the city!" Her grocer, on the same principle, was a "China merchant;" and her milkman, though his daughter—Heaven help her!—was as an apprentice, only destined to pick up the educational crumbs which fell from Miss Womble's ill-supplied table, yet even Miss Jay, poor, despised Miss Jay, was spoken of as "the daughter of an agriculturist!"

Some of the children, as they entered, greeted each other with that warm affection which is the sweet offspring of innocence and love; but the first day at school after the Christmas holidays is always a sad one. Eyes look red, and many have severe colds, and others have been crammed at home into an over-fed stupidity, which it takes them a week to get

rid of; though they have much to tell each other, they are not in spirits to tell it yet, the establishment harmonising as a whole but on one point, that of staring at the new pupil, for Miss Womble had but one "*that half*."

Marian endured the stare with a good deal of the composure of a well-bred lady, neither returning nor shrinking from it; and when Miss Womble entered the room and spoke a word or two to each, her cheek, for the first time, flushed, for she felt something like pleasure in recognising a face she had seen—there are times and situations when we would hail a foe almost as a friend.

Miss Womble's greeting to each was in exact proportion to the sum paid by the parent for the pupil; and, as no abatement had been desired for Marian, she was patted on the head, kissed, and told to go up-stairs. Quite aware of Marian's extraordinary genius for music, she hoped that she might soon succeed Miss Kemp as "crack pupil" in that material department of display.

"Miss Kemp, you must make a pet of this

little girl; you will find great pleasure, I am sure, in superintending her practice—it is already a pleasure to hear her play."

"Oh, oh," thought cunning Miss Kemp—Miss Womble's was the third inferior school she had practised in—"Oh, oh," thought she, "Miss Womble thinks to make me useful in nursing a rival, does she?" and she walked upstairs after Marian, for the purpose of ascertaining more about her.

Solitary as the foundling had often been at Mrs. Jones's, that solitude was happiness to the feelings she experienced when, after being half-washed and assisted to dress by the fagging offspring of the "agriculturist," she descended, in the dim twilight, to the dim and freezing atmosphere of the school-room, where Miss Kitty murmured over the prayers, with a total absence of interest or sympathy in their holy import. Then followed the bustle, the riot, the discontent of the first morning, as to who was to be monitor, who was to sit here, who there, complaints of Misses This and That,

sneers and snaps, with a muttering of questions and replies as to what they had seen and what they had not seen during the holidays; while Miss Kitty, perfectly unmoved, sat in Miss Womble's chair, arranging lessons, marking quantities, naming books, appointing classes, lecturing the two apprentices, calling "silence," in her suppressed voice, which was itself a silence, "doing the school business," which, to be "done" properly for thirty girls, would have fully occupied two if not three teachers.

At last "Miss Winter" was called.

"Got any books?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

"Fetch them."

Marian went up-stairs and brought down her hoard—a heap of ignorant story-books, selected *by herself* during her walks with Kitty or Ma'mselle; two volumes of Shakspeare's Plays; "Elegant Extracts;" the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments;" a Bible and Prayer-book; Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress"—these last

being gifts from Mr. Jones; and two or three others, as dissimilar as can possibly be imagined.

Miss Kitty turned them over one by one—placed the Bible and Prayer-book by themselves, and laid the others in a heap; Marian standing by, her eyes glittering with pleasure, as she surveyed her treasures. Miss Kitty then marked down and placed aside a heap of Pinnock's Catechisms, Goldsmith's brief, imperfect, and mangled Geography, and Magnell's Questions, and a pile of necessary and unnecessary books — necessary, as regarded making out the bill—unnecessary, as far as the education of a child of nine years old was concerned; and Marian was desired to remove them to her locker. Marian was pleased to be allowed to have such nice new books, "all for herself," and was about adding her old to her new store, when Miss Womble entered: the school rose *en masse*, and Miss Kitty abdicated, having first directed Miss Womble's attention to Marian's favourites. After looking at one or two, the governess said—

"You cannot have these books any more, Miss Winter."

"They are my books, Ma'am."

"That does not matter: they are not yours now; I take them from you."

"They are mine, Ma'am," repeated the little lady resolutely; but Miss Womble, when afterwards telling the story, quite forgot she had provoked that obstinacy.

"Not when I say they are not," said the injudicious governess, committing an act of tyranny where she should have reasoned. Had she told Marian they were not books fit for her to read at school, and that she would take care of them for her, then, indeed, Miss Womble would have conquered, as a teacher ought, by the strength of superior *reason;* and it is a power which a child seldom attempts to withstand.

Marian burst into tears. And how frequently do the ignorant and the unfeeling misunderstand and misrepresent the tears of childhood! How difficult it is to judge what string has jarred of the heart's mysterious chords! How impossible, *at first,* to comprehend the feelings

and affections of a young child! How cruel to irritate, where it is a duty to investigate and to soothe! How fatally easy to strengthen bad habits, and absolutely *create* evil passions, by harsh and unjust treatment! Nothing galls a sensitive or high-minded child so much as injustice.

"You cry because you cannot have your own way," said Miss Womble.

"No, Ma'am," sobbed Marian; "it is for my 'Elegant Extracts,' and 'Gulliver,' and the 'White Cat.' My dear, dear books!—oh! leave me them; only to look at, and indeed I will not open them!"

"I shall not trust you, little obstinate miss. Here, Miss Jay, throw those trumpery pamphlets on the fire, and take these to my room. Be quiet, Miss Winter! I must show you that there is to be but one mistress here. Little obstinate minx! she does not care for the books: it is the spirit of contradiction, that's all!"

Any one who remembers the nature of the highly-wrought temperament of the foundling

will at once perceive how little Miss Womble knew of her disposition. Marian really loved her books; they had been her only companions; each was endeared to her warm young heart. There could be no doubt whatever of their being unfit for her, and it was necessary to remove them; but the manner of doing it should have been different. When she saw her cherished friends blazing on the fire, she screamed, and used the most violent efforts to rescue them from the flames—of course, without success. But her flagrant disregard of Miss Womble's power was too serious a breach of school discipline to remain unpunished: she was compelled to stand in the stocks for more than an hour; and, on refusing to apologise or reply, sentenced to solitary confinement.

Miss Womble had never considered how dangerous it is to a teacher's authority to hazard strong measures with a child until fully acquainted with its disposition; and she hardly knew how to act when Marian obstinately refused to ask pardon.

"The books were mine," she repeated;

"and, even if she took them from me, she had no right to burn them: they were mine!—they were mine!"

A sofa was put into the dark closet, and there Marian was doomed to sleep.

"Little obstinate thing, giving so much trouble!" grumbled the housemaid. "Why don't you say 'sorry,' and be done with it?"

Marian was sadly fearful of darkness, yet her obstinacy overcame her terror; and she was awoke out of one of those sound sleeps, which only the young know, by the key turning in the door.

"It's only me—me, Tom Kemp, as the girls call me," muttered a voice, which Marian recognised.—"It's only me, little stoopid: here, I have brought you some cake and fruit. We always have a key on the sly for this dunny—we call this room dunny—because we never know who may be sent here, and it wouldn't do to be starved, you know, by any of them. Why don't you beg pardon at once?" she continued, as Marian sat up and ate the cake with avidity. "Where's the good of holding out?"

"They were mine!" repeated Marian; "and I'm not sorry."

"But you ought to be sorry."

"Why, Miss Kemp?" inquired the child.

"Call me Tom: those who love me call me Tom; you know the governess said you ought to be sorry, and that's enough."

"But, I think——" recommenced the child.

"Think!—Well done, little fairy-finder! Think!—Why, you didn't come to Miss Womble to *think*, but to obey! Who ever heard of a school-girl thinking? and such a little one as you, too! I tell you what it is; say 'sorry' to-morrow—there's a dear!—and we'll lend you story-books out of school-time."

"Those were mine!" repeated Marian, sadly, "and she had no right to them."

"Bother!" exclaimed the good-natured but ineloquent Miss Tom. "Who ever heard of a girl's right at a preparatory school? I'd have left this long ago, only my pa's a poor Irish officer, with five sons and my beautiful self, and he can't afford to pay for my finishing; so I shall never be finished, I suppose—go

into the world unfinished, live unfinished, *die unfinished!* But you must learn not to contradict a governess; no good ever comes of it —only starvation and double lessons and black-hole, that's all—and enough too! I don't like to see you up here, though you are to cut me out—but it will be a long time first, clever as you are; there, kiss and good night. Now, say 'sorry,' like a good girl. You won't? then indeed, Marian, you are an obstinate little fool. Why, if you had a mother, you would be obliged to beg pardon if you were naughty."

"Beg my mother's pardon!" exclaimed Marian; "so I would a thousand times; but I have no mother!"

And the child hid her face in the pillow and cried bitterly. Miss Kemp again advised her to go to sleep, and beg pardon. Marian, however, held out much longer than it could have been supposed a child would continue of one mind; but hunger and harshness, and, above all, solitude, at last conquered, just as she had established a character for the most unflinching obstinacy—which, I must confess, she

deserved. A teacher of Miss Womble's class always experiences a pleasure in exaggerating the early defects of her pupils: it is a sort of commentary upon the perfections of a system which she insinuates will overcome such faults; and, accordingly, Marian's offence was repeated, with variations, both to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, until the latter cast up, as usual, her hands and eyes, and prayed that Heaven would forgive her for having been instrumental in prolonging the existence of such a demon. Fortunate was it that Mr. Jones remained firm to his resolve; and two years were added to Marian's existence without any occurrence which novel-readers would consider worthy of recording. But those who would seek to know the *cause* of the *feelings* and *actions* of men and women must go back to childhood and its impressions for their origin. The information Marian obtained was superficial and frequently erroneous; for the errors of what were then, and, in too many instances, *still are, school-books,* left her much to undo in after-life. The system was one of duplicity and harshness.

Sunday, instead of being rendered a day of religious and rational happiness, was one of gloom and discontent, Miss Womble being in the habit of selecting *punishment lessons* from the New Testament—a course quite sufficient to make any child dislike the book, to which, of all others, she ought to turn for consolation. These tasks were repeated on Sunday: indeed, the day was invariably one of tears. The only girl who seemed to enjoy the day was Miss Kemp: she had the piano all to herself to play Handel's music.—Moreover, there was always roast beef, preceded by Yorkshire pudding, for dinner, of which she was particularly fond; and, altogether, "Tom" was the only really happy girl on, what *she* called, "Miss Womble's Sabbath."

Marian had acquired a considerable proficiency in music—having, thanks to Miss Kemp, learnt to read it fluently; and even Mrs. Jones, during the one week in which she tolerated her during her second vacation, was obliged to confess her musical progress far beyond her

expectations. Her beauty increased, so as to render her remarkable; and her governess, in consequence, always placed her in the foremost rank during their show walks; and when the bitterness of their first quarrel was past, the governess praised the superiority of her system, and latterly grew rather kind to a child who gave her so very little trouble, and produced, certainly, four-fold for all seed sown.

## CHAPTER XI.

### MARIAN'S NEW TRIALS.

A REMARKABLE change had taken place in Marian's character. She had, from the time her governess exercised her authority so unnecessarily, remained silent and reserved—proud and distant to her companions.

The only person towards whom she manifested any affection was "Miss Kitty,"—it was like the clustering and perfumed woodbine clinging round a blasted tree, to see those two, so dissimilar in age and appearance, entertain towards each other a species of mute sympathy, amounting to little more than silent companionship, yet having a foundation strong but strange.

In the winter evenings, when the long school-room, rendered more drear by the introduction of two narrow "dips," by whose light three-and-thirty children were to learn their lessons—in those winter eveniugs, Marian

would steal to Miss Kitty's side, and assist her in the never-ending task of patching, and mending, and arranging the several articles of her slender wardrobe. Sometimes her spirits would outbreak, and for some minutes she would shine like a meteor amongst her companions, and then, as if ashamed of an hilarity she felt she had no reason to indulge, she would withdraw into herself, and, again sinking by the teacher's side, recommence darning the raveling stockings, whose fabric could ill support the new cotton she applied, certainly not skilfully, to the rents. Few words passed between these two solitary beings, but, when the clock struck four, and all but the teacher were released from labour, then Marian was by the assistant's side, and there she remained till bed-time. It was a painful rather than a pleasant union, imparting neither joy nor happiness; and yet her schoolmates declared that Miss Kitty had at last found a favourite.

Another year passed as the former. A hungry mind, like the plant which springs

from the apparently barren rock, will always find food, and Marian managed to obtain nutriment where others must have starved; but it was not of a healthful or invigorating nature. Occasionally she extracted good; but it was a happy circumstance that her native pride prevented her imbibing any of the low mean qualities which are the general fruits of such a system as that by which Miss Womble lived; in fact, it produced an opposite action, and rendered her, even in the sweet and yielding days of early childhood, unusually austere. She could have been melted by kindness, but the reverse rendered her repulsive and unamiable.

"Polly," said Miss Kemp, one morning, to Marian, "will you swop my pink sash against your gloves? The gloves don't fit you, and they will me."

"I won't swop, but pray take the gloves; do take them—they will fit you, and are useless to me."

"But why won't you swop? Why, Miss Womble has been swopping with the old-

clothes-man this morning—her remnants for his silver. Ah, Polly! Polly! you will never be worth anything. No wonder Mrs. Jones complains of your extravagance, you little puss! There, don't look so scornful, nor don't mind poring over that poem; if you were to say it like an actor you'd never get the prize—I tell you you wouldn't. Miss Junks 'll have it, because her father's rich, and she has four younger sisters."

And Tom Kemp was right. She understood Miss Womble. The young lady with the younger sisters won the prize.

I had forgotten to mention an anecdote of my friend Katty, which occurred after Marian had been six or eight months at Happy Home House, or, as Miss Kemp called it, The Three H's. Katty, finding that all access to her darling was strictly prohibited, thought she would try what could be effected by stratagem, and waited on Miss Womble accordingly. It was in vain the governess said "not at home" to the importunate nurse, Katty would not be denied. "Why should

she?—All she wanted in the wide world was a bit of spaking with the misthress;" and at last Miss Womble descended, in all the pride and dignity of a five-flounced stiff silk, and demanded what she wanted.

Katty curtsied low, and, opening the door of a small breakfast-room, backed into it with much skill and dexterity.

Miss Womble, though unused to follow her inferiors, *did* follow. "And now, woman," she said, "what want you with me?"

It was Sunday; the governess had just dined, and taken, it might be one, or perhaps two, extra glasses of port wine.

"Thank yer honour," said Katty, curtsying.

"Thank me!—For what?"

"For calling me woman, Ma'am," replied Katty; "which is making me all the same as yourself, in one way, any how. And sure it's a compliment I didn't altogether expect, for it's bether and bether ye'r looking, not all as one as a poor thing like me, that throuble has melted into a shadow."

"What is your business?" inquired Miss Womble, sternly.

"I'm a laundress now, if you plaze," she said, again curtsying, and wilfully misunderstanding her querist; "and what I come about is, to know if you'd be plased to let me do Miss Marian's washing."

Miss Womble turned away.

"Mrs. Cavendish Jones, for no rhyme or rason that ever I could make out, dispiled me of the sight of her, but I hope *you* will show me a little compassion, Ma'am, dear! The sight of her bits of things would keep my heart up, like—give me new life, as a body may say—cheer my spirits."

Miss Womble laid her hand on the lock of the door.

"Ah! do, now. Jist consider—if you had a child of yer own"——

"Woman," interrupted Miss Womble, "you are very offensive!"

"Well, I humbly ax yer pardon, but"——

"Say no more on the subject—not another word! Do you suppose me so utterly and en-

tirely unprincipled, after the instructions I have received, as to permit you to hold any intercourse with the child?"

"Oh, no, Ma'am! Though I'm a poor ignorant woman, I know better nor that, any way. But stay, now, and listen to rason. Sure there's no harm in axing a lady like you, famous all over Chelsea for that same, to listen to rason. All I've got to say is this—if you'll be so good as to do what I ax ye, it 'll be better for yerself. See this, now! Let me do the darlint's washing, and I'll charge nothing for it, only you may put it in the bill all as one as usual."

Miss Womble removed her hand from the lock.

"I took the laundry," persisted Katty, "and make a pretty penny by it—I'm well used to rubs, ye see, Ma'am—and it's for ever obliged I'll feel to you, and no one the wiser of it, and it sich a comfort to my heart. I'll take my Bible oath never to *let on* to man or mortal the 'greement between us two, but to keep it a dead sacret—silent as the grave."

"What motive have you for this?" inquired Miss Womble, twisting her sharp features into an aspect of inquiry, or rather of curiosity, which is a very distinct quality.

"Motive!" ejaculated Katty, clasping her hands, and altogether forgetting the part she had to play; "motive!" Oh, thin, Ma'am, ax yer heart what motive I *could* have for loving the babe that has slept in my bosom, and has none beside to love it!"

She looked at Miss Womble's unimpassioned face as she spoke, and the expression of her own countenance changed to that of contempt, while she forcibly restrained her words.

"Any how," she added, after a pause, "jist think—the bill 'll be all the same, and sure my doing that hand's turn can't harm her."

"Really," said Miss Womble, "you seem a very kindly, compassionate sort of person; and, as it is so perfectly a matter of feeling, why—you may have the washing, on those terms—and, perhaps—you would not mind, now and then, a dress or so of mine?"

Oh, not at all, Ma'am—no objection whatsomever; people, masthers and the like, always make an allowance to the misthress; all the same as the duty-pigs and the duty-fowl we pay in Ireland, which is no pay, you see, only a token. So I'll wash yer dress with all the veins of my heart; and," she added, to herself, "give it enough of the rotting pearl-ash, any way."

Thus Katty accomplished her purpose; and many an apple, orange, and sweetmeat was conveyed in the returned clothes to her favourite. This, unfortunately, was not the only secret correspondence or traffic carried on in the school. Persons not gifted with high principles can never properly direct the principles of others.

The mortifications poor Marian experienced during the vacations were great indeed. Mr. Cavendish Jones had become more and more inactive, and Mrs. Jones more and more capricious; her clothes were not replaced by new, and the backless and hard forms of the school-room had occasioned a slight curveture

of the spine; her fine constitution was yielding to the effects engendered by want of air and exercise, and her temper growing morose and severe. Her love of learning, her thirst for information, seemed likely to outlive her bodily strength; and Mrs. Jones complained bitterly of her want of "needle industry" and activity. She was no longer the spoiled pet of the Sloane Street drawing-room, but, the moment a double knock was heard, felt it her duty to withdraw.

One afternoon, during her vacation, she was summoned from the servants' attic, where she slept, and, on entering the "company-room," saw a tall, superior-looking woman, sitting by the sofa on which Mrs. Jones reclined.

"You do not remember me, my dear?" said the stranger.

"No; she never remembers anything or any one: she wants to be a blue," sneered Mrs. Jones. "She is quite oblivious. There, draw the coverlet over that sweet Persian cat; it will catch cold in its eyes, from the draught of the door."

"She could hardly remember me," said the lady, taking her hand; "it is now a long time ago, and persons seldom remember what was said or done at their christening. Do you ever see your Irish nurse, now, or is she dead?"

"She is not dead, Ma'am, thank you," commenced poor Marian, touched by the tone of kindness.

"How do you know whether she is or not?" queried her tormentor, peevishly; "and why did you not say 'My Lady' to Lady Isabella? Could you not see she was a lady?"

"I saw at once she was a lady—and a kind one, too," she added; but, as"——

"As what, child?"

"As you did not introduce me, Ma'am"——

"Introduce *you!*" repeated Mrs. Jones, scornfully. "Girl, pray recollect yourself! Introduce *you*, indeed, to an earl's daughter!"

"Then I will introduce myself. I am Lady Isabella Gascoigne, and you are—I wrote the name down—Elizabetha Juliana Marian Winter. You see I have a good memory. And a

very sweet baby you were. I am glad to find you so grown."

"Keep down your shoulder, Marian," said Mrs. Jones; "you are always elevating that shoulder—pushing it out to show its whiteness, I suppose. It is positively not decent! Keep it down!"

Marian blushed, and drew up her frock.

"It is not her fault, Mrs. Jones," said Lady Isabella; "this dear girl's health and appearance will be quite destroyed, if you do not see to this little curve in time."

"Oh, my lady, she is healthy enough," replied the harsh woman; "and straight enough, too. No good comes of much beauty. Marian will have to exert her talents. We have done a great deal for her as it is."

"I am sure you feel happy in having been the instrument of good to one who so well rewards your trouble," said Lady Isabella, rising. "Would you permit your protegée to visit me?" she inquired.

Marian involuntarily, but unfortunately,

seized the lady's hand: the request was at once and somewhat rudely, refused.

Lady Isabella coldly curtsied her adieus, and, for many subsequent days, the ill-used girl had to pay the penalty of being admired by being abused.

A week after Lady Isabella's visit Mr. Jones died suddenly. There is something so appalling in sudden death, that every one feels who sees it; and more than once did Marian steal into his room and kneel and sob by the side of the cold and silent corpse. His widow, for the first day, was inconsolable—the second, she ordered her weeds—the third, she talked of the mutability of human affairs—the fourth, a friend or so were admitted to her chamber, just to play piquet, join in abusing the unbecomingness of the widow's cap, and rouse her spirits—on the fifth, she sent for Miss Womble, and, after the customary and necessary demonstrations of sorrow, commenced speaking of Marian.

"You really must manage to reduce the ex-

pense of that child's education, my dear Womble. I am now left, I may say, destitute."

Miss Womble made a gesture expressive of astonishment.

"I mean *comparatively*. What is fifteen hundred a year to a woman like me, who spends so much in active benevolence and my *few* peculiarities?—I may well call them few. But Marian has been with you now some years, and ought to be useful. Can you not keep her as a half-boarder, or finish her education as an apprentice? Indeed, she might now very well pay for her board by teaching the little ones."

"My dear lady, you forget that Miss Winter is very young."

"Pray do not call her *Miss*, Womble. She is quite puffed-up enough already. My poor, dear, fond, and—to you I may confess it—foolish husband, never thought he could do enough for her, and told her more than once he would leave her something in his will. Can you fancy anything so absurd? It's a fact! And he did, too."

"You don't say so!" ejaculated Miss Womble, who was always delighted at the idea of people having money left them, when there was any likelihood of her benefiting thereby."

"Yes, indeed, he did; but, fortunately, the codicil was unsigned. Was it not fortunate?"

"Very!" sighed Miss Womble.

"A thousand pounds, it was!"

"It would have just finished her education nicely," said the speculating Womble, pensively.

"Don't you wish you may get it?" replied Mrs. Cavendish Jones, bitterly, thrown quite off her stilts and elegant English by the aptness of the observation, and not at all relishing the insinuation conveyed. Miss Womble laughed one of those ghost-like laughs which sound like the death-knell of mirth, but made no further comment.

"At all events," resumed Mrs. Jones, "if the child continues with you, the price must come down. The sooner she is finished, and able to do for herself, the better. I cannot longer suffer the acute and energetic benevo-

lence of my exquisite feelings to lead me captive, as they have hitherto done. I must (as Dr. Darling says) arouse the dormant selfishness of my too generous nature, and turn over a new leaf. No hurry, Miss Womble, until after the last tribute to mortality is paid; and then I must determine that miserable child's destiny. Not one woman in a thousand would have acted as I have done; not one in a million could; because (as the phrenological man with the bronzes in the Strand beautifully says) the organ of benevolence preponderates in my development. I should not like it generally known, but I have *almost* proof that that child was the offspring of—but no, I must not repeat what must necessarily operate to the disadvantage of my poor dear ——. Well, well, men *are* frail, my dear Miss Womble!—men *are* frail!—and we are their victims. Poor, dear, believing, natural, unsophisticated creatures, like us, are their victims!"

And Mrs. Cavendish Jones covered her face with her cambric handkerchief, after the most approved fashion.

Miss Womble took her departure in a very bad humour, and at the door encountered the ever-pliant, ever-smiling Dr. Darling.

"Going to see our friend?" she said. "Very sad affair! Poor dear Mr. Jones!—but he always ate too much. Sad thing, very, for people to eat too much; but she 'll have a nice jointure—very comfortable. It is quite time *you* thought of marrying, Doctor," she added, in a tone intended to be playful and insinuating.

"Always right!" replied the Medico, smiling. "I call you the Chelsea oracle, Miss Womble; and, as a proof that you are always in the right, I have——but this is a secret, absolutely."

"What!" exclaimed the curious spinster, casting up her hands and eyes in an ecstacy of astonishment—"What! *not* already popped the question?"

"Yes, I have, I assure you."

"Oh, Doctor, so soon!—and been accepted?"

"And been accepted!" repeated the Doctor, triumphantly.

"My good gracious me!—and she not to tell me a word of it!"

"But you do not wish me joy, my dear lady!"

"Oh, yes! I wish you much joy—a great deal of joy! So soon!—I am really astonished—I had no idea!"

"But you have just said it was quite time," continued the Doctor, laughing outright, and rubbing his kidded hands in ecstacy at Miss Womble's perplexity and astonishment—"You said it was quite time."

"Ay, for you, Doctor; but such a breach of decorum on her part. *You* certainly have great charms, Doctor; but how *she* could so far forget herself!—Well! and the poor man not dead a week! Lucky woman, to have a dead and a living husband!"

And Miss Womble, this time, laughed convulsively.

"Dead and living husband!—whom do you mean, Miss Womble?"

"Why, I mean your fair bride, Mrs. Cavendish Jones that was—Mrs. Richmond Darling that is to be."

"Very good, very good!" replied the Doctor —"Very sweet, charming woman, no doubt, is Mrs. Cavendish Jones."

Dr. Darling had never, within the memory of man or woman, been heard to say that any person in the world was not sweet and charming; so it was nothing extraordinary his giving this opinion of Mrs. Cavendish Jones: but he added—

"I was not altogether so ambitious as you imagine, my dear Madam—I preferred a less full-blown, less cultivated flower: I was married yesterday morning to Clara Norris. Good morning, Miss Womble—delighted to see you looking so fascinating."

And the Doctor bounded up the steps with the air and alacrity of a bridegroom.

"Well, if ever!" exclaimed the spinster, as she walked slowly on—"Well, if ever!—but I never did hear anything to equal that! Why, he has been paying particular attention to

every woman in Chelsea and its vicinity for the last ten years; and, then, he was so very, very particular in his attentions, and yet so general, that every woman thought herself the object—the monkey! I've seen him dance round a circle of twenty girls—a flower to one, a compliment to another, a bow to a third, an emphatic sort of a smile to a fourth—pousetting with that, bowing to this, driving t'other—and now to marry Clara Norris!—and she without an idea in her head or a penny in her pocket! I am sure my poor friend will be disappointed; I am certain she expected; but so did twenty at least. I remember, when I had seven pupils ill in measles, he was particularly attentive to me; even Miss Kitty observed it. He used to squeeze my hand, and 'dear Madam' me so tenderly: to be sure, I do believe he did the same to all the ladies in the district. Miss Norris!—and I never to have heard of it before; but if I have not heard of it, there may be a hundred others in the same predicament."

And, at this crisis, Miss Arabella Womble

made a pause, and then whirled round; and, full of her recently-obtained information, called at, at least, ten different houses, and had the supreme felicity of finding all at home, and totally ignorant of Darling's marriage.

"Oh, la!" said one old lady, "I'm sure I gave him every encouragement: he was so very attentive to Clarissa when she had the hooping-cough; and Conney—I have heard him say he never saw such eyes as Conney's."

"Except his own," replied Miss Womble. "He admires his own amazingly."

And then the fair chronicle proceeded to another and another; and one lady went into positive hysterics; the next damsel talked of an action—all expressed astonishment; and, before her task was done, Miss Womble had also the satisfaction of imparting her belief in the utter heartlessness and stinginess of her particular friend, Mrs. Cavendish Jones. Seldom had she felt herself of so much importance to the world in general, and the observant and eloquent district of Chelsea and Sloane Street in particular.

## CHAPTER XII.

### WOOING A WIDOW.

"FIFTEEN hundred a-year, a well-furnished house, a handsome carriage, besides money in the funds." This was the actual state of Mrs. Cavendish Jones's affairs; but report magnified her wealth amazingly. It was astonishing how many young men suddenly discovered that Sloane Street was a pleasanter lounge than the Park, and either cantered or walked past the new widow's dwelling. Great interest was made for introductions, and many were given—others refused; some on the ground of wishing to avoid interfering in delicate matters —while many had cousins, half-pay officers, slender curates, or young mercantile men who wanted capital, whom they desired to see established, for reasons foreign or domestic, in the widow's favour. To a delicately-minded woman this sort of celebrity would have been painful

in the extreme; but Mrs. Jones was again raised in her own estimation, and became so positively absurd, that it was impossible to witness her airs without the bitter laughter of contempt, or the disgust which compels you to turn from what is so absolutely unpleasant. Her thoughts were divided between two things —what she could possibly do to make her weeds becoming, and what sort of husband she would have to rule over her heart and property.

She had married long before her folly was full blown, and it seemed as if it were never to attain its perfection: it went on increasing, and multiplied exceedingly. She would sit all day at the balconied window, in the most languishing attitude, lounging in a chaise-longue, playing with a paroquet, or combing her Persian cat; and, truth to say, the lords of the creation were in no degree averse to humouring herfancy. Half-pay officers are peculiarly open to this sort of temptation. Doomed to appear like gentlemen, in every sense of the word, upon means which frequently a well-charactered

footman would scorn to accept as a remuneration for his services, it is not to be wondered at that they have a very quick perception as to the ways and means of increasing their incomes. Three of this description were ready, before three months of the lady's widowhood had expired, to throw themselves at her feet, and possess themselves of her fortune.

One, a bluff, burly Major of fifty-four, attempted to storm the citadel with his family connexions—and a wooden leg; but the simpering lady of forty-six mincingly told him she did not intend to marry her grandfather. The bluff Major stumped down stairs with considerable emphasis, and forgot to give the smiling footman the fee which he had learned to expect from all his mistress's suitors.

It is a common thing to accuse clergymen of marrying for money: the taunt is not justified by my own experience; there are few in that class of society who have enough to support a respectable appearance, still fewer who are wealthy. It is to be hoped that no Christian pastor would engage the affections of a young

woman only to steep her to the very lips in poverty—that worst of poverties—*genteel poverty*; and if a gentleman have but a small income, it is only just he should seek for a companion whose dowry would add to their mutual income. This is but just; yet the reproach is heaped upon them, and it is thought a witty thing to jest at a poor parson and a black coat. It is as well to record that Mrs. Cavendish Jones had but one clerical lover, and, as he never officiated, there is little necessity for considering him as a Reverend. He was "burly and big;" and the lady having, in her heart of hearts, resolved to have no one who was not pale and interesting, dismissed him with very little coquetting.

The fact was, she had made up her mind to marry the handsomest man in the neighbourhood—an artist, who having, according to his own belief, taken his art unto himself for a bride, never wasted a thought upon the widow. She had met the youth at church, where widows always and artists seldom go; and, finding her usual attractive ways wasted upon him, she suddenly resolved to have her picture painted

for about the tenth time in her life, and many of her wooers urged her thereto, each hoping to possess the fair original. It would be difficult to imagine what put the young artist into her head: it could not be appreciation of his talent, for that she could not appreciate; it was doubtless his celebrity. In the mean time the lady was fooled to the top of her bent—surrounded by wooers. A French dancing-master, always in attendance, who had gone to various expenses with gilt spurs, smart canes, and elaborate waistcoats, to make himself appear, what he professed to be, a foreign officer, twirled his moustachios in such fierce displeasure that they were in danger of falling off when the pale student came to take the first sitting: a banker's clerk exchanged glances with a finikin contributor of prose and poetry to small magazines and the little annuals: a medical student, who always discoursed of surgical operations, bowed himself out. In short, the drawing-room was deserted soon after the easel was fixed, except by an impudent attorney and an Irish officer, who had been on foreign service.

Mrs. Jones did not wish to be pourtrayed in

weeds, and so she resolved she would be painted in some character—something out of Shakspeare's plays—something (to use a newly-acquired phrase) *classical*. The attorney suggested Juliet in the balcony; no, that would not do; Juliet was black-browed—she, fair as day. The Irishman, out of a bit of spite to the attorney, suggested Portia reproving Shylock; but, no—Mrs. Jones had heard that the artist played chess, so she had bought a handsome board and a set of men, all arranged beforehand, and, after some hesitation, said she would be Miranda. Then came the question, who would be Ferdinand? The attorney was on the point of offering to sit, but was distanced by the Irishman. He made the offer; and, to the attorney's delight, experienced a rebuff, such a one as he was not likely to forget. Then the man of law thought his opportunity had arrived, and hinted how happy he should be to play Ferdinand to such a Miranda: the lady turned him off with even less ceremony than she had bestowed upon the Irishman, who was certainly the handsomer of the two. The

suitors, *nonsuited*, departed; but the lady remained firm in her determination to be painted as Miranda, declaring that "When *she was finished*, the gentleman could be *put in*."

Mr. Brandon, of course, objected to this unartistical mode of proceeding, declaring that it would be necessary to sketch the group; and not till then did the lady lisp forth, with a hanging-down of the head and a drooping eyelid, that he might "*Draw out* a man's figure—any man's figure—*his own* would be better than any other—just do the beginning of it to make the group—go on with her, and finish it as it might be afterwards." This hint was broad enough; but the young man either did not or would not understand it. The lady languished, fluttered, and talked (all she could talk) nonsense; and Mr. Brandon smiled as gaily as a man can smile who is oppressed by the weight of pecuniary difficulties, and dare not yield to the yearnings of a proud and noble spirit.

The moment an object became difficult of attainment, its value increased tenfold in the

eyes of this foolish woman; and she resolved to conquer the artist, even though she might possibly change her mind afterwards. It began to be whispered abroad, particularly by those who saw the picture, that the lady had made up her mind, and that the second mourning, which she had adopted all too soon, would be exchanged in a little time for the bridal veil. Some of her suitors quitted the field—a few bold ones remained. The attorney, who knew by experience that it was possible, by persisting in a case, to ruin a client, much less an opponent—the Irishman, bold and brave—the *ci-devant* dancing-master, continued firm and true, and the medical student kept a sharp look-out; while a lieutenant in the navy declared there was no knowing how soon the wind might change, and was prepared to tack with that wind. The author of all this commotion was kept in a state of most delightful excitement, and devoted her days and nights to dreams of love and romance; during which time poor Marian and her school sufferings were unthought of—except once, when Miss

Womble, more lean and yellow than ever, broke in upon her with a complaint, that, if it were not for her affection for her dear friend, she could not retain so profitless a pupil in her establishment.

There was a painful absurdity in the scene which day after day took place in the drawing-room at Mrs. Jones's. She, seated in a throne-like chair—very unlike any poor Miranda ever possessed in her island-home—leaning over a chess-table, to which she often called the artist's attention, entreating that "he would teach her the moves;" now begging his opinion as to one attitude, then as to another, and twisting herself into half-a-dozen pretty shapes in succession; while the young man, disgusted beyond measure with the woman, could not help pondering over the advantages which this wealth, flung as it were before him, would bestow.

And no wonder he should so ponder.—Charles Brandon had the misfortune to be born a gentleman—and a sad misfortune it is, unless means are either bequeathed or achieved to uphold the station: moreover he had all the

feelings of a gentleman warm about his heart, and that heart beat as proudly within his bosom as if he had inherited the possessions as well as the name of his ancestors. Charles Brandon's pride, be it observed, was exactly of the pure, high character that would have *lived upon itself* in a garret, and been satisfied, provided the world did not know of his privations, and that he could have covered them in darkness and solitude. But his mother lived—a gentle, loving, and beloved mother, who had fostered and cherished her high-souled and beautiful boy to the almost starvation of herself—not the starvation which some people talk of enduring, and which means dining off mutton instead of venison, but the starvation that divides the penny roll, and then appropriates *both* portions to the object of its solicitude. *This* she had endured, and would endure again; and often sat in loneliness in his painting-room—in loneliness, and the sickness of heart that is engendered of disappointment—even then (when he was witnessing the heartless folly of her whom Miss Womble insolently

dared to call "*his patroness*") she sat in loneliness, with its attendants, cold and hunger, because every nerve was to be strained to send her son forth as a gentleman, and enable him to attain distinction in that art, he was certain if he lived, and could struggle for a time, to triumph over.

Mrs. Brandon saw this; she understood his talent; and some had praised his pictures who really understood what they said, and despised the jargon which, in nine cases out of ten, is all the hired critics know of the glorious art they malign or misunderstand. The boy and his pencil companioned each other until he arrived at manhood, and then his singular beauty, proud step, and lofty carriage commanded notice, of which his mother was proud. And it is not very certain that, at twenty-three, the son despised the homage of bright eyes, or the whisper of admiration that sometimes reached him when he entered a room.

Mrs. Jones, who possessed to the full the vulgar habit of inquiry, found out that the young man had a mother, and immediately

invited her to her house. Mrs. Brandon knew nothing of Mrs. Jones's vacillation and folly; she had long ceased to have commune with society, and her heart yearned towards kindness, and returned the commonest attention with the warmth and earnestness of long pent-up feelings, which blazed forth at the first breath of what was little more than courtesy. Then Mrs. Jones praised her son. What a direct road that is to the heart of a fond and unsophisticated mother!—she praised her son! She showed her the painting, and said how well he would look as Ferdinand. Mrs. Brandon, though simple minded was quick sighted; she saw the woman's drift; she saw the well-furnished house; she had ridden in the comfortable carriage; she partook of the sumptuous fare; she thought of their cheerless, almost foodless home—of the gloomy past, of the uncertain future. Her memory supplied her, with astonishing accuracy, with tales of those who had died of starvation, and whose talents were rewarded afterwards with innumerable newspaper paragraphs of praise—a

biography got up for a bookseller's advantage —and perhaps a slab in a church, where the subject of the eulogy might have heard service in the aisle without being offered a seat. She did not combine all this, because she was, as has been said, a simple-minded woman—(it is not at all necessary for women to be intellectual to be good and affectionate); but she had both heard and seen much of the strange, unnatural union of misery and talent; she remembered what they themselves had gone through; she looked with the eyes of a mother's love rather than with those of a mother's ambition; and somehow came to the conclusion that Mrs. Jones was not so bad, and that, perhaps, Charles might not do wrong in marrying her. It is possible, too, that she thought she might not live very long, she looked so thin and pale, and felt so weak.

At night the widow's carriage conveyed them home.

"What a nice carriage this is!" she exclaimed. "I wonder, my dear Charles, will you ever have a carriage of your own?"

"I am sure, dear Mother, I do not care, as long as I can walk; though, for *your* sake, I wish I had one," was his reply.

"Really, Mrs. Jones is very kind; I wonder is it quite true that she has fifteen hundred a-year? I fear, my dear son, it will be a long time before *you* make fifteen hundred a-year."

"I am sure it will; but what then?"

"Very true, my dear; we have lived on much less for a long time."

Charles Brandon smiled at the simplicity of his mother's observation; but latterly he had hardly been able to smile when he looked in her clear, placid face: she seemed fading away like a phantom before him; her voice and her kind smile were unchanged, but she was drooping; and he had not the means to procure her those necessaries, those comforts, which her declining years and increasing infirmities required. Of a weak and feeble frame, she had nevertheless struggled against more black and stormy sorrow than women in general encounter; and, though she had not sunk under it,

it had shaken and torn her constitution. The decay, however, had been so gradual that, she herself was insensible of it; her thoughts and feelings were wrapt up in her son; her child was her world—she knew and wished to know no other.

It is foolish to say we do not perceive the change that takes place from day to day during the sickness of a beloved object: those who say so know not what the watchfulness of love is. If absent for some time from a cherished person, we may be shocked at the change sickness occasions in the appearance; but watchful affection observes each little alteration as if seen through microscopic glass, that magnifies evil. Charles Brandon loved his mother too tenderly to be blind to her sufferings, and he often gazed on her until obliged to turn away to conceal his emotion.

"We have certainly," she repeated, in the half-patient, half-grateful tone that is so touching, "lived long on the difference between fifteen hundred pounds and fifteen hun-

dred guineas; but what does that matter now, my dear? the past *is* past—it was, is over. Whatever we may have to encounter to-morrow the suffering of yesterday is gone—that is a great comfort, Charles. God has been very good to us—given you fine abilities: to be sure it was a great struggle to get them forward. Do you remember how often we walked to the print-shop with those beautiful sketches? and how, one night—oh, dear boy! *do* you remember that particular night, when I was obliged to leave you with your poor sprained ancle in the dark, because we had neither candles nor credit, and run down to the same shop, where the man had so often insulted our poverty by his neglect, to ask if anything of yours had been sold; and how astonished I was at his new civility; and then he told me down gold—pure glittering gold? A great sculptor had purchased two pictures, and taken your name down; and after I had been home, and told you of it, do you remember how you sent me out to buy myself a new cap, in case the great man should call—never thinking how

many things you wanted? And then, when he did call, and turned over the sketches and designs which were in the great brown paper case, I could only listen to his praise and his advice, and weep."

"I hope," said the young painter—"I hope, dear Mother—to use a common phrase—that the corner is turned."

"Well, I hope it is; but corners are hard to turn, Charles—hard to turn in all things—even in the hemming of a pocket handkerchief."

And having so said they descended at their own door; the artist having bestowed his last half-crown on the footman, while the footman thought it should have been five shillings. But Mrs. Brandon had not said half she intended to say, and was only restrained from saying more by seeing her son gazing on a portrait he had lavished all his skill upon—of a gentle blue-eyed girl, which he intended for one of the exhibitions; and well she knew he loved the very shadow of that girl, though, perhaps, he knew it not himself. And she

could not help contrasting the rich brown hair, the intelligent yet winning smile, the hope and life and loveliness of that beautiful being, with what they had just left. Perhaps his thoughts ran in the same channel, for he turned away and sighed; but then fifteen hundred a-year! —how very long before Charles could make fifteen hundred a-year!

It so happened that poor Mrs. Brandon caught cold that night—how, no one could tell; yet catching cold is a universal topic of small conversation; and Mrs. Jones flew to her relief with jelly and marmalade and honey, and all the hundred-and-one things that are prescribed for colds. Young Brandon's heart was more touched by Mrs. Jones's kindness to his mother than ever it had been with her wealth; though, indeed, it is needless to say *that*, for what lofty heart was ever touched by gold? Mrs. Brandon's health was rapidly declining; and, to the excitement produced by the dismissal of old and the arrival of new lovers, was added that of anxiety about "poor

dear Mrs. Brandon: such a mother! such a son! such a prodigy! such sentiment! such devotion!—exquisite, beautiful being!"—until the hints and observations, the remarks and plain speaking, of all who knew the young painter, compelled him to ask himself what he meant to do.

Unfortunately, at this particular crisis, Dr. Darling said that the warm air and bright sun of Italy might revive the drooping woman—might, in fact (for Dr. Darling loved to make people happy), make her better than ever she had been; and visions of Rome and Venice and Naples mingled with his mother's image restored to health, as his first memory of her was (for painters have fervent minds); and he read over in Byron all that has thrilled so many hearts, descriptive of the country and its magic. He read it by the light of a single candle as he sat by his mother's bed-side; and when he raised his eyes from the inspired page, her mild blue orbs were fixed upon him: they looked to him at that

moment as if pressed back by the fingers of death into their sockets.—And he could save her—by a sacrifice!

He smiled in bitter mockery when he thought how many would deem him fortunate in securing the widow and the widow's gold. The next day she came, and said how much, how very much she, too, should like to visit Rome; she had a pretty mosaic that was bought in Rome: and Genoa—she would like above all things to go with dear Mrs. Brandon to Genoa, to tend her as a daughter—and to buy crimson velvet on the spot; but, if she did, people would talk—nay, she was sure they would—the world was so unkind; and then she should be injured by her feelings. And while she so spoke she looked down, and seemed modest, as if anxious to recall her words.

The youth's feelings were sadly harrowed, for he assured himself, for the first time, that there was some one he loved even as dearly as his mother, and he fancied she loved *him*. To be sure it was a hopeless affection; but who

ever believed in the hopelessness of a passion, when both loved and both were young? There was another and a higher principle tugging at his heart and flushing his pale cheek: he despised himself for truckling with a feeling so high, so holy as love. It had hitherto been to him a thing above the world—exalted as the stars of heaven—pure as the mountain air of a free, unfettered country—glorious as the mid-day sun—beautiful as that fairest of all painter's dreams, a young and lovely woman; and yet he had been calculating on the advantages likely to arise from the semblance of it—summing up the pounds, shillings, and pence, that were to outweigh Mrs. Jones's age and Mrs. Jones's folly. He shuddered at this new sensation, and turned from it in disgust; but then his eyes fell upon his listless mother—listless for the first time—and though she returned his glance, yet it was in such a fashion that his heart heaved with agony. And then came Dr. Darling and talked to him again, saying that his mother's only chance of life was in removal; and, when he clenched his hand

and shook his head, the Doctor laughed, and replied that the fault was all his own, for that a certain fair lady had said so and so. And well indeed did the Doctor fulfil the mission which doubtless had been entrusted to him by the widow; and at last the painter resolved that, for her sake, who had done so much for him—for *her* sake, he would do what would save his mother.

That night he sat by her bed-side a changed man. He seemed determined not to think; he talked wildly and recklessly of the future, but would permit no allusion to the past. He had wound up all the energies of his strong young spirit to a determined point, and flung himself upon the troubled waters, reckless of the consequences. He told his mother he should be very happy; they all would be happy; and she would recover—he knew it—felt it. He would not suffer her to speak of Mrs. Jones; this was the last time, the last evening, he should be unfettered; for he had written to request the lady to fix an hour when he might see her on a subject involv-

ing (alas, how truly!) the happiness of his future life, and she had replied, on rose-tinted paper, that she would see him at nine, "too happy if she could contribute to that happiness."

He tore the billet into a thousand atoms, and ground it into the thread-bare carpet with the heel of his boot, even while he held his mother's clammy hand in his, and while he talked to her of happiness. She did not understand the feelings that sent the hectic burning to his cheek; but she thought of the blue Italian sky, the property, the kindness of Mrs. Jones—little knowing that the kindness of fools is as evanescent, as uncertain, as the northern light, that shoots athwart the sky and then is seen no more. He arranged her pillow, steeped her temples in eau de Cologne, the gift of her new friend, read her a few verses of one of her favourite chapters, lit her thinly-burning lamp, and having kissed her as he never kissed her before, left her for the night. He then went into his painting-room, and steadily gazed upon the picture he had once joyed to paint

with a determination of purpose that seemed immoveable. He drew his penknife, and attempted to destroy the work he so loved. It was in vain; his hand trembled—the instrument of destruction fell from his fingers—and he turned from it, in all the bitterness of self-reproach, feeling he had not strength to perform what he considered his duty.

"It is for the last time—the first and last time," he murmured. And, falling on his knees before the copy of her he loved, he kissed the lips that were all but warm with life. He then took it from the wall, packed it carefully up, and directed it to the original, to whom he had once promised it. He threw himself upon the sofa, in the same room where he always slept: but sleep will not bid the wearied and fevered spirit rest; he could not even close his eyes. At last, tears relieved his heated brow, and he clasped his hands upon his throbbing temples. Suddenly—he might, perhaps, have slumbered, but, if he had, he awoke, with an indistinct idea that he heard a noise in his mother's room—the little chamber he had

quitted. He listened, with his heart upon his lips, but it was not repeated. Again he tried to sleep; no, he could not. He crept noiselessly to her bed-room door; all was silent—silent, he fancied, as the grave, where the writhing of the red worm is noiseless as the progress of that time which gives it food.

The silence was oppressive: he knew his mother's slumbers were light as childhood's sighs, and he feared to disturb her. Still, if he could but hear her speak: he thought the least sound of her sweet, gentle voice would relieve the weight his heart trembled under. He listened till the intensity of his attention deprived him almost of the power of breathing. For the second time that night his hand trembled; still it was on the lock of the door, and he opened it. The light that streamed from within told him the lamp was burning; though he did not perceive it immediately, as the grey morning was already in his painting-room. There was no sound; but, as he had entered, he thought he would just peep at his mother—it had always calmed him to do

so; he was sure she would look happy in her sleep; she had seemed so tranquil, so cheerful, so full of hope both for here and hereafter when he left her last. He approached the bed, and withdrew the thin curtain; agonized at once by what he saw, he pushed back the hair from his brow. Could it be real, or a disordered vision of his imagination?—There she lay—her long thin fingers, having grasped the clothes, were clenched in the convulsions of death—her head had fallen on her shoulder, and blood was filtering from her lips. It was evident she had burst a blood-vessel, and that the slight noise which had at first roused him proceeded from her efforts to call for assistance. He saw he was recognised; one hand moved towards him: frantic as he almost instantly became with grief, still he felt that she wanted to bless him. He sank by her side: with the strong effort of purpose urged by the deep affection which only a mother feels, she raised herself for a moment, and, suffocating as she was, she placed her hand upon his brow, and

the words "Bless—good son!" came forth, with the last bubble of her life-blood.

Assistance was useless: Darling came; kind as ever—kinder, indeed—where such feelings as Charles Brandon's for a time took away all power to think or act. It was to such persons and at such times that the Doctor's sympathies, fairly awake, showed their benevolence and humanity: he was then truly, as children frequently and expressively say, "his own self." True to all noble feelings, which the conventional forms of society so frequently paralyse, he felt deeply for the high soul that was prostrated by the holiest grief which stirs within us: he wept with him—real unaffected tears, he would not have shown to the mob for worlds. How blessed are such springs!—how clear should they be kept from the rubbish of earth!

A few words convinced Dr. Darling that the young man would have sacrificed himself for his mother; and, with ready tact, he undertook to arrange a matter which he knew Charles

Brandon could not even think of then. When all was over, and the green turf pressed upon his mother's grave in the most beautiful churchyard the immediate neighbourhood of London can boast—Old Brompton—then, indeed, Dr. Darling conversed with him as a friend, almost as a father, about what it was right to do. The consequence was, that Mrs. Cavendish Jones had a fit of passion, a fit of hysterics. and a determined aversion to painters. The incipient attorney almost fancied he had a chance; and several military men returned, as they ought, to the charge. But the lady seemed resolved to do something that was remarkable—something quite out of the way—something wonderful; that is, after declaring for a week and two days that she would never marry—once or twice she thought of becoming a nun and endowing a convent; but she was easily dissuaded from that: then she talked of going abroad; but that would not do; for several intelligent and communicative persons in the loquacious neighbourhood where she resided assured her that Dr. Darling had been

seen to drive with Charles Brandon early one morning to the Boulogne steamer—and that his trunk was directed to Rome, *via* Paris—and that, except his trunk and a folio, he had no other luggage, except indeed a square, flat deal case, neither large nor small, that looked very like a picture. Some even asserted that it was the portrait of a lady—a young, handsome lady—and others declared that an officer in the neighbourhood, who had a very lovely blue-eyed daughter, had a picture of Charles Brandon in the little back parlour. To be sure, though the officer's daughter was very pretty, it was a satisfaction to the gossips of Sloane Street to know that she was a fool—which, they repeated, she certainly was, as she had refused two such good offers!—Positively, two! The daughter of a half-pay Major to refuse *two* good offers—of course she must be a fool! Now, it was hinted to the widow by many whose interest it was she should remain at home, that, if she went abroad, everybody would say she went after *the artist*—and Mrs. Jones's delicacy and pride of course assumed

a befitting dignity at the idea of entertaining a predilection for "such fellows!"

The widow, after all, was taken by storm—her future destiny was soon decided. She took it into her head to talk Dr. Darling into recommending her *horse exercise*, and received lessons from a fashionable riding-master. Somehow or other a horse, that had never stumbled before, stumbled in the smooth path of the Gloucester Road, and a gentleman, whiskered and spurred, and whipped and booted, sprang from the mysteries of Cromwell Lane, just where the bar marks the entrance to the house where Canning lived, and—oh, fatal degradation!—where Don Carlos blindfolded an innocent and unsuspecting minister—from that lane the cavalier sprang to her assistance, and caught the fainting—for once *really* fainting—lady in his arms.

Now, whether the riding-master had or had not anything to do with this singular rencontre, is a matter which it is impossible to determine. Thus much, however, was certain, that it was precisely the sort of introduction the

lady would have delighted in, because it was something *outré* and uncommon. The gentleman acted his part to admiration—stammered and bowed, and sighed and ogled—prevailed upon her to have the saddle changed and mount his horse, and insisted on leading the animal himself—after the manner in which cavaliers (according to old pictures) always led the horses of their lady-loves.

By the time the happy pair (followed by the grinning groom and the riding-master—the latter a little in advance of the servant, but not on a level with "the gentry") arrived at the corner of Swan Lane, where a tall white house, with green blinds, looking like a ghost in green spectacles, overlooks the passers-by—just as they had reached this particular point, the gentleman had received permission to call the next day, and inquire after the lady's health. When they arrived at the "Hoop and Toy," the lady was enlarging on the subject of nervous sensibility; and, by the time the horse and its rider had journeyed to the "Bell and Horns," the gentleman had actually inquired

if the lady believed in the possibility of love at first sight; before they had passed the church of Old Brompton she had answered in the affirmative; and, by the time they reached the corner of Sloane Street, the cavalier had been as thickly spattered with mud from the vulgar wheels of a city omnibus as he had spattered the lady with compliments. When she arrived at her own door, Miss Womble was in the act of knocking thereat; and, some how, the cavalier, or, as Mrs. Jones called him, "her generous preserver," entered with them—lunched, drank wine, jested—won Mrs. Cavendish Jones's heart and Miss Womble's displeasure: for the schoolmistress had really entertained a hope that her "fair friend"—her "dear friend"—might still have been brought round to look kindly upon her other friend, the little attorney, who, certainly on the strength of her representations of her influence with Mrs. Jones, had promised to gather in certain little outstanding accounts, for the diffusion of that species of knowledge which Miss Womble had the presumption to term "useful."

Miss Womble had called to consult with Mrs. Jones touching the scantiness of Marian's wardrobe—her own extraordinary patience and virtue—and the ingratitude, more or less, of every species of girl that ever entered a school-room. Some people, in conversation, treat you to nothing but lights and shadows—the lights being themselves, the shadows their neighbours. This was Miss Womble's invariable practice. At such schools as hers, girls have nothing to be grateful for; but, even when well and kindly treated, the young are very seldom grateful to their instructors; and this arises from the false positions that exist as regards the teacher and the taught. It is necessary to do away with the repugnance which youth feels to the pains, penalties, and restraints of first lessons — to render the teacher not only as agreeable as possible to the child, but as respectable as possible. This is absolutely necessary; and is what not one parent in a thousand does or thinks of doing: consequently, the instructor wants influence, and education wavers between rebellion and

labour. When the tasks are ended, and the business (as Miss Womble would call it) finished, the instructed think no more of the instructor than they do of Murray's Grammar or a torn map. In a word, the system of education is altogether fearfully wrong; and to it the accumulated evils of society—false excitements, false positions, false ideas—are attributable. Neither Miss Womble, we are sure, nor any of her class, would agree with us. Everything connected with education, in her opinion, resolved itself into two ideas—Christmas and Midsummer accounts!

She was obliged to bid Mrs. Jones adieu, without being able to bring her to the point of her visit; for though she stayed out the gentleman, whose card bore the names "Mr. Leopold Stanley Edward Trufit"—enough, as she spitefully observed, "to set up a *firm*"—still she could not get a hearing; Mrs. Jones being absorbed in herself and her new friend, "her gallant preserver."

It might be about ten days after this inter-

view that Miss Womble, being seated in state in her drawing-room, where the chairs did duty, *sentry fashion*, round the walls of the apartment; and a round table in the midst, perfectly guiltless of spot or blemish, was sprinkled over with various specimens of the art of spending time without profit—tigers in tent-stitch and robin-redbreasts in chenille—glass baskets and pen-wipers, match-cases and paper-folios, that it was evident could not secure a letter. The only book in this miscellaneous collection was an album. There were many ottomans, the work of the "halfs" and apprentices; and all arranged with that species of stiffness which the low-bred mistake for state. Supreme amongst these elaborate performances sat the lady—having abdicated in favour of Miss Kitty for the rest of the evening. She had been calculating in her own mind what possible use the ends of worsted could be turned to, and whether the Diffusion of Knowledge Society would allow her a larger per-centage than her old bookseller, when Mr.

Guiny, the youthful attorney, whom, to quote her favourite phrase, she had "patronised," was announced.

Attorneys certainly must be born different to all other men: I wonder does anybody remember an attorney in long-clothes? It does not appear possible that they could ever have been childish or innocent—affectionate or unselfish—or even commonly honest.

Well, Mr. Guiny was no exception to the rule; — exceptions, however few and far between, are certainly to be met with — occasionally, like a four-leaved shamrock. Many begin the profession with honourable intentions, and some persevere to the end; but human nature can hardly stand the wear and tear of law roguery—it is more infectious than typhus fever and more destructive. Like the generality of his tribe, his eye was carefully shrouded by a drooping lid; his step was careful; his figure bent; his voice confidential — at first, always confidential— though, if the person he addressed was in his

power—which means being in his books—he became a changed man; his eye gleamed cunningly; he swaggered in his gait; and his voice spoke the mingling of the bully and the braggart.

"And pray, Madam," he inquired, "when have you seen your friend, Mrs. Cavendish Jones?"

"Not lately, Mr. Guiny: I fear she is not going on as we would wish."

"No, Madam," he answered; "it's all up!"

"Sir!" ejaculated Miss Womble; for at that time slang was confined to a class even lower than attorneys.

"Why, *I've got the sack!*"

"Really, I do not understand you."

"The turn-out; so have we all—all but that piperly fellow she picked up, or who picked her up—Trufit; it's a settled thing. It's a shame—and the poor gentleman not a year in his grave!"

"I am shocked and astonished!" said Miss

Womble. "Not but what a year is a very fair time—nothing to say against *that*—but I fear you must have played your cards carelessly."

"That's not bad!" he answered, with insufferable impudence. "Now, you know *me*—knew the worthy man to whom I served my apprenticeship, and who used to say so mournfully that he had assisted at the ruin of his best and oldest friends, without somehow being able to help it: he died worth eighty thousand pounds, and began the world with eightpence in copper and a good suit of clothes, which he exchanged for a bad one and traded on the difference. Now, with such an example as *that* before my eyes, do you think *me* likely to play my cards carelessly?"

Miss Womble confessed she did not; and the young attorney laughed triumphantly.

"No, no! But she'll smart for it. The worst of it is, he's sure to have her; and, worse again, I'm out of pocket by the spec."

"The what?"

"The speculation. But I've a capital case."

"Breach of promise!" exclaimed Miss Womble, while her eyes sparkled with the delight of anticipated *exposés*.

"Breach of fiddlestick!—she was too cunning for that. No; but I can make out a bill of costs—clear as day."

"For what?"

"Consultations. Why I have two notes, requesting my attendance to discuss the merits of—a turkey!"

"An invitation to dinner!"

"What does that matter? And I have abundant proof that she asked my opinion, before witnesses, three times as to her own affairs."

"Not before me!" said Miss Womble, drawing back in her chair, and shaking her hands. "I have nothing to do with it!"

"Not with *that*, certainly—I can do very well without you in that matter; but this"—and he drew forth an oblong, bluish, awkward-looking parcel, neither a letter nor a packet—"but *this*—this, my dear Madam—you will greatly oblige me by settling immediately."

"That!" ejaculated the lady, drawing still farther from the man of law—having a desperate antipathy to all bills except her own—"That! Why, I don't owe *you* anything; and, indeed, have no reason to be pleased; for you never looked after those little accounts, as you promised to do."

"Oh, yes, I did! I followed your instructions to the letter. See here—

"'To taking instructions from Miss Womble. . . . . 6*s*. 8*d*.
To writing to Mrs. Grace, according to said instructions . 6*s*. 8*d*.
To——'"

Miss Womble fell into an agony of passion.

"Why, you told me you would do anything to oblige me—it was understood!"

"No, my dear Madam, it was you who obliged me to attend to such trumpery business. I——"

But it is better to drop the curtain over a picture of knavery and meanness. It is well to know that, though sometimes we may see the "wicked in great strength, and flourish-

ing like a green bay-tree," yet their time *will come—must come.* Indeed, it is not a little curious to observe that such persons as Miss Womble and her attorney-friend invariably turn their spider-like fangs upon each other when distanced by a nobler quarry. And so we leave them; and simply add, that it became an understood thing in the neighbourhood that Mrs. Cavendish Jones was the betrothed bride of a Mr. Somebody Something Trufit.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### SCHOOL MORTIFICATIONS.

A FEW weeks more, and Marian felt that her situation at school was, indeed, changed. No time was permitted for the practice of her darling music; but she was obliged to teach what she knew to those younger or more ignorant than herself. She learned no lessons, consequently had no place assigned her in class. Dancing and French masters came and departed; and she had the mortification of hearing her governess say to the former, that, if she danced, it must be without charge, as "she had taken her on trial as an apprentice." Her feelings towards Miss Kitty remained unchanged, but each dreaded to show the other any kindness, as Miss Womble revenged Mrs. Jones's stinginess on the unfortunate child. The outside pieces and stumps of vegetables were sparingly deposited on her plate; and,

worse than all, she was obliged to sleep with a girl who was almost an idiot. Compelled to look after the pupils' work, wash their slates, dress their hair, and be ready at their call, Marian's spirit did not sink, but it rebelled; it did not become debased, but its reaction was violent. She remembered the luxury of her childish years; she felt and understood the cruelty which compelled her to the worst sort of servitude, without there being any necessity for such privation, or her having given cause for it either by inattention or misconduct. Miss Womble had treated her as a being without affections; *and, whoever loses sight for a moment of the affections in female education, is utterly ignorant of the structure of the female mind—ignorant, also, of its aim and end.*

Marian had always been reserved; that quality deepened into doggedness. Her fine musical talent, and the value her teaching and exhibitions were to her governess, were too remarkable to be overlooked; but, after the sufferings, injustice, and taunts of many months had made her alike insensible to praise or

blame, she refused to exhibit at Miss Womble's command. Then followed imprisonment and starvation; and, at last, the governess resolved to take her to Mrs. Jones, and see what she could make of her. The unfortunate victim of caprice and mismanagement had been a fortnight in solitary confinement: there was now no good-natured Miss Kemp to enter her prison—no one but Miss Kitty who took any interest in her: she had latterly been disobliging and harsh to the children; and they are all prone to follow the example of their elders, and consequently look down upon the "halfs" and apprentices. Even Mrs. Cavendish Jones was shocked at the palor and poverty of her appearance, as she stood before her, a tall, thin, transparent-looking girl of nearly fourteen.

"My God! Miss Womble, she looks starved!" exclaimed the capricieuse, who, having that day completely discarded her mourning, preparatory to her again becoming a wedded wife, was in a singularly bland and gentle humour.

"I assure you, my dear Lady, she starved herself."

"How could you be so wicked, Marian?"

"I did not," she replied, sullenly; "I had no food to eat."

"She is the greatest liar under the sun," said Miss Womble.

"I never told a falsehood, Ma'am," exclaimed Marian, firmly, "since I have been under your roof!"

"You see, Ma'am!—you see!" observed Miss Womble, pointing to where the girl stood; her almost bloodless and trembling lips compressed; her full, large eyes burning with the fire of indignation; the whiteness of her skin rendered more remarkable by the threadbare mourning-dress which Mrs. Jones would not have suffered a servant to wear; while her long, thin arms were folded across her bosom, and her luxuriant hair fell in matted tresses on her shoulders.

At this moment the bridegroom-elect entered, with a rattling, swaggering carriage, which bespoke him a youth (for he was little more) of small wit and great expenditure. He complimented his intended on her beauty (she was all rouge and false ringlets), bowed stiffly

to Miss Womble, and patted Marian on the head. Mrs. Jones mentioned who she was, and sighed forth her great regret and disappointment at her misconduct.

"Not like school?—Devilish right, 'faith! Never could bear it myself: jaw-breaking Latin—jaw-sticking dumplings. Girl of spirit! Refuse to teach little chits?—Right again! Play quadrilles? Disappointed in your playing man to-night, Kittens?"—(this was addressed to the intended bride)—"Make *her* stop and play for us; only ten altogether. Sermonise after the wedding, not before; poz as to that. Dare say, Mrs. What's-your-name—oh, beg pardon, *Miss*—Miss Wombwell: any relation to the menagerie man? No, eh? You are like, very like! Fine fellow, old Wombwell!—him and his lion two greatest curiosities extant. Well, now, the best plan—let her alone—had enough of school—give her head for a mile or so—a little breathing-time—send her back as fresh as a lark to work again."

"But really, Sir," said Miss Womble, much

astonished at the style and manner of the *last* pet of her friend's choosing—"But really, Sir, I brought her here to be punished; she is beyond my management."

"I knew it, by Jove!—knew it!" exclaimed the jockey-gentleman, bursting into a horse-laugh, louder than the scream of either parrot or macaw of old—"Knew it! could have told it to Kittens there. Never saw a filly yet broke-in by a mare, however respectable. No disparagement to your taste, talents, or abilities, Madam—no, no! Come, Kittens, can't refuse me?—know you're not hard in the mouth; never were, I am sure. Broke in already, eh? Let the girl stay for a bit; change her feed; nothing like it. Good morning, Miss; hope you may be soon in the situation of your friend, Miss. Better than flogging girls, or making them parade, to the time of the 'Dead March in Saul,' up and down Sloane Street. Permit me——"

And, without another word, Mr. Trufit opened the door, and bowed the astonished Miss Womble out.

The governess had heard that Mrs. Cavendish Jones intended changing her name, but she little thought that, ere the wedding was over, she should have been so unceremoniously treated by "the intended." She compared the rouge and flaxen ringlets with the hale and healthy aspect of the bridegroom; and thought for a moment of the very visible difference between seven-and-forty and five-and-twenty; and then fixed her mind upon the indignity with which she had been treated by "A whipper-snapper jockey fellow, without an idea."

Firmly believing that there was no more money to be got out of Mrs. Cavendish Jones for Marian's education, or for any other purpose, she resolved to make a merit of necessity, and absolutely dismiss her from her establishment; nor did her overboiling temper cool till she had effected this purpose—written a voluminous letter to her "dear friend," in which she was imprudent enough to risk a few sneers against her "intended"—allude to the impropriety of a woman of her age and respectability

being called " Kittens "—and foolishly remonstrate with her on the imprudence of the step she was about to take. Spinsters or dames should write few *confidential* letters, and never to any one in a passion.

Marian Winter having expected a change of treatment for the worse, if such were possible only experienced a change of raiment · and, when fairly equipped, was pronounced by the " reduced four-in-hand" " A neat turn-out." She was present when Miss Womble's letter was received, and heard the comments passed upon it by the ill-suited pair. The indignation excited by Miss Womble's injudicious remonstrance completely effaced all remembrance of Marian's obstinacy and alleged misconduct; and, though she could not join in the squeakish and roaring laughter of the bride and bridegroom elect, yet she felt it an unspeakable relief to have escaped, even for a time, the cruelty she had endured.

Our English females retain their freshness and their beauty longer than any women in the world; yet a lady of the mature age of

seven-and-forty will find herself sadly mistaken if she expects to charm by the wiles and the girlishness of eighteen. Her object may still be to please; but, if she mean to please, it must be by dignity, and that sweet matronly wisdom, which is not as the sun to shine, but as the star to guide. Young as Marian was she could not avoid feeling disgusted with the girlish affectation of her patroness. Her head was covered by a crop-wig, whose flaxen ringlets descended on either side confined by a fillet of roses, beneath which her dull, lightless eyes moved without expression over the highly-rouged and hollow cheeks.

Mrs. Cavendish Jones had never been either a handsome woman or a fine one: there was no intellect to succeed the charm of youth; and, when her light, careless laugh fell upon the ear, it was matter of astonishment whence it could arise; the lips that sent it forth were so thin, and the aspect of the woman so perfectly at variance with everything like cheerfulness, that the mirth was tuneless as the scream of the lapwing over a damp and new-

made grave. It is all very well for women to marry a second time, if the remnant of affection which the departure of a first-love leaves is worth bestowing, or if want or pining misery stare them in the face and point to the altar as a place of refuge. Or, supposing they have no love to bestow, or no want to avoid, there may be some who like to torment themselves, and, with a good and comfortable independence, yield up their regained liberty to feed the wants of some fortune-hunting youth, whose purse will be all the better of the widow's plenishing. But, let women of "a certain age" beware of the affectation of youth, if they would avoid the shipwreck of their respectability and character. As the loveliness of girlhood fades from their cheeks, and the liquid brilliancy of youth departs from their eyes, let them make unto themselves charms which neither the rust nor moth of time can corrupt: let the warmth of goodness yield its gentle tinting to their cheek, and let tears of tenderness, of mercy, of loving-kindness, make their eyes moist with those beauties which will

not be destroyed but perfected by an hereafter. We must all fade, but it is in our power to *exchange* our charms. Keeping far from us envyings, strife, jealousy, evil-speaking, let us, as our days increase, improve in wisdom and good deeds; caring for the young, comforting the old, and rendering home the throne of domestic happiness. Women who so act will not find their latter years unloved or unlovely.

"What an infernal old cat that Womble is to be sure!" exclaimed Trufit; "and to call my kittens *respectable*, just as bad as if she had called me *honest!* How could you place that child with her? Now, it's no use; I'm sure she was devilishly treated all the time—were you not? An infernal hag to write in this manner;—'dismiss you from her establishment'—she shall be made an example of——"

And Mr. Trufit talked Mrs. Cavendish Jones into the belief that Miss Womble had most grossly insulted and imposed on her, and that everything she said was false, and that the "Filly," as he persisted in calling Marian,

would be pleasant and useful; and Mrs. Cavendish Jones herself thought that, as Pauline "had turned out such a wretch," Mary might save her the expense of a new maid, "till she could look about her," and be useful at the piano, and write her notes, at all events run up and down stairs till after the wedding.

And so Pauline was dismissed instanter, and Mary was permitted to attend Mrs. Jones's toilet that night, where she received her first lesson in the arts practised by elderly ladies to make themselves appear young.

It was past one o'clock before she re-entered the room, where her infancy had passed. Pauline was gone; she had the apartment, littered and confused as it was, to herself; not thrust into the highest attic with the kitchen-servants, as she had been in her miserable vacations, but absolutely in what *had* been called the nursery; there was the high-backed chair, her bed—her *own* bed—and painful many of her childish days had been; still every one has some feelings of affection connected with the sights and sounds of infancy.

It was bright moonlight—she threw up the window, and the lights of Cadogan Place gleamed through the foliage of the pretty plantation which separates that rather more aristocratic row from Sloane Street.

The change which had taken place in her situation seemed miraculous; but she smiled bitterly when she remembered its uncertainty. Nothing promotes the growth of wisdom so rapidly as sorrow; it is, in truth, the hot-bed of all knowledge, but while it forces it weakens; and such rapidly-acquired "reason," like a hot-house plant, was unfit for the changes and breezes of ordinary existence. Often those who are best acquainted with sorrow know least how to support it—their wisdom has not sprung from the right seed.

The air refreshed her fevered brow, the natural buoyancy of youth whispered a change for the better, and her only school regret was—Miss Kitty! "She will be worse off than ever," thought poor Marian; "she will not have any one to sit by her side and darn her stockings, —and they were all out at the heels and toes."

Feelings and remembrances, wise, grave, gay, and childish, pressed upon her. Tom Kemp! poor, good-natured, rough, yet clever Miss Tom; she, despite her leanness and complexion, had absolutely run away from school with a soldier. The event, if known, would have ruined Miss Womble; but Tom's father had died, and her mother, unable to pay higher terms, had confided her with many tears for another year to Miss Womble, while she took her boys to a cheap continental school, forgetting that her daughter had received none of the principles of a sound and virtuous education. She told her that "she would be able to educate her little sister, after she had placed the boys out." Tom thought "That, 'faith, that *was* good! And so, after educating half Miss Womble's pupils, and being crack music for five halfs, I'm to mope at home to educate Livy? Catch me, that's all!" —In another week she eloped with the serjeant of a marching regiment, who had been engaged to drill the young ladies.

Marian knew she was gone, but feared to tell;

and Miss Womble agreed to forgive her secrecy if she promised—swore, almost—that, if ever she saw Mrs. Kemp, she would declare that her daughter jumped out of the window, without any one's knowing it in the house.

This Marian refused: "I will not tell unless I'm asked, but she *did not* jump out of the window, and the house-maid left the door open," was Marian's reply; and then she was punished, for what? For resolving to speak the truth.

Marian's natural abilities could not be destroyed, even by the treatment she endured; yet they were not only uncultivated, but had been greatly *perverted*. Many years of her after life were spent in endeavouring to get rid of the feelings and habits engendered by a bad system. She frequently asked herself, on the memorable night, when, freed from Miss Womble's tyranny, she sat weeping beneath the beams of the moon in her own little chamber—she frequently asked herself, if it was really true that she was to return no more to

the miscalled "happy home." She resolved to try and conquer her obstinacy, and submit to Mrs. Jones's caprices. She almost regarded Mr. Trufit as her guardian angel: he had praised her playing, got his bride elect to order her a new wardrobe, and absolutely freed her, by a bold and decided stroke, from the tyranny she had so long, not borne, but withered under.

Mr. Trufit was, in the general acceptance of the word, good-natured, that is, he liked to see people like himself, cheerful; and willingly contributed to that cheerfulness as long as he was not inconvenienced thereby.

While his intended was wondering whether he suspected that her ringlets were bought—her roses borrowed, and Marian was wondering if he would be always good-natured—the object of both their thoughts was finishing his night with some kindred spirits, and vowing "That wooing his widow was the hardest steeple-chase he ever rode."

Marian's thoughts were interrupted by the sound of a well-known voice beneath her win-

dow, one brogue in earnest converse with another brogue ;—a policeman talking to a woman.

" Why, thin, Jakes, is it yerself?"

" Faith, yes, Mrs. Macane, it is: how are ye, Ma'am?"

" Purely, thank ye; only a little stiff, betimes, with them rheumatics—they make their way into the bones, Jakes, and stay there for their amusement, jist as Boneypart did in the heart of Spain."

" Why, thin, Mrs. Macane, what brings you out at this hour? Sure it's agin the regulations for me to be stopping here—it's walking I ought to be. Ah! thim times are changed since my poor father used to be keeping the peace and the law up and down this street. He might take a snooke of a sleep, comfortable, and quiet, and easy, and no one to say 'Paddy Charley (as he was always called), wrong you did;' but I must keep on the batther for eight long hours, without bit or sup, barring I ate the way the dray-horses does—on the fut."

" Well, it is hard enough, to be sure," responded Katty; " but it might be worse."

"What worse?" demanded the policeman, sharply. "What worse nor being obliged to eat on the fut, ever and always?"

"The having nothing to eat, and no fut to stand on," replied Katty, laughing.

"Och, bother! ye're still at the joke, Mrs. Macane, Ma'am. I wonder the age doesn't drive the joke out of you. Ye're like my father—the very moral of him, as one might say."

"I'm glad to hear he has even one moral," responded Katty, laughing again at her own conceit; "but don't be angry, Jack Charley, for, after all, there's no one in the wide world wishes you nor yours better nor Katty Macane. Sure, if one wouldn't make free with one's own people, who would one make free with?—And it's long enough I've known you, any way, avick!"

"Still ye haven't tould me what brought you here at this maraudin' hour."

"Why, thin, just what you war slanderin' this blessed minute—my feet."

"Now, be asy—something *beyant* that, I'm sure."

"Well, it's neither here nor there; though, maybe, you can tell me if the chap—the genteel, knowing fellow, who, instead of troubling himself about building a new nest, takes up quiet and asy with the nest of an old bird—is gone home or not?"

"Oh! Why, then, he *is* gone home, I can tell you that; for Ellen, the black-eyed little housemaid, let him out."

"And you in. Ah, Jack! Jack! for all your blue livery, take care of yourself, and mind your *patrouling*, and *not* little black-eyed housemaids, as tells everything going on in a house, no matter whether it's true or not—a thing every servant, man or woman, should beware of. I don't know a more contemptuous thing in the whole universe than that chattering, jabbering way some has. What did she tell you, Jack, avourneen?"

Jack could not help smiling (few even of her familiars dared to laugh at Katty) at the perfect ease with which Mrs. Macane condemned the fault she herself practised.

"What did she say, is it? Why, she said

Mr. Trufit had gone to his club, after topsy-turvying the house, and insisting on the mistress taking in that young girl you and my father pickt up in the airee a great many years agone. And sure, Mrs. Macane, isn't it quare that, after so long, we should all, as a body may say, taking the in and the outside of the house, isn't it quare that we should all be here to the fore?"

"All to the fore?" repeated Katty. "No, we're not all; the poor ould gentleman himself is gone, nor is there a house in the line where there hasn't been change of some kind. But are ye sure she said the young lady was back? Sure, I've been watching that hunter all day long, to ax him a favour about her."

"Do you know him?"

"Och! not at all; no need for that; I don't yet, but I will. My heart's asy now. It's better for her to be here than with that starvation school-keeper. The ould bride barred the house agin me long ago, so the only chance is the young bridegroom. You're sure he's gone home?"

"He's gone to the home all the young gentlemen find out,—the club; but ye'll lose your character, Katty, if you do be afther young gentlemen this a way."

"Don't bother me about character—don't!" was Katty's ungracious reply; "but be off with you, do," she added. "A pretty policeman you are, to stand there doing nothing; that's the way the people gets robbed and murdered."

"Good night, Katty," said the young man, moving off. "That's woman all over; you 'traduced me to stay, with your tongue, you got all out of me you wanted to get, and then you reproach me." He stept back to look up at the house, and, as he did so, he caught a glimpse of Mary's receding figure. She could not hear the observations he addressed to her faithful nurse, though they were uttered in a louder tone than even the former dialogue; but, ere she closed the window, Marian felt assured that Katty had recognised her, for she sung her a line of one of her favourite ballads—

"Sleep on, sleep on, my Kathleen, dear!"

No girl in fairy tale, gifted by godmother fairy with all good gifts, ever rejoiced in the knowledge of such guardianship more than the Foundling did in the belief that "Nurse Macane" had discovered her whereabouts, and watched over her destiny. What omnipotence there is in love!

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by W. Clowes and Sons, Stamford Street.

# MARIAN;

OR,

# A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

By Mrs. S. C. HALL.

AUTHORESS OF "LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF IRISH LIFE,"
"UNCLE HORACE," &c. &c.

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"Did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?"—Milton.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.


## CHAPTER I.

PAGE

THE WEDDING BREAKFAST . . . . . 1

## CHAPTER II.

THE DEPENDANT'S TRIALS . . . . . 28

## CHAPTER III.

A RESOLUTION TAKEN . . . . . 71

## CHAPTER IV.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE . . . . . 114

## CHAPTER V.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE . . . . . 133

## CHAPTER VI.

THE "NURSE" IN A NEW CHARACTER . . . 182

## CHAPTER VII.

KATTY MEETS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE . . . 207

## CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE

A GLIMPSE OF SUNSHINE . . . . . 239

## CHAPTER IX.

THE PROSPECT BRIGHTENS . . . . . 251

## CHAPTER X.

THE WELCOME VISITER . . . . . 284

# MARIAN;

OR,

## A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE WEDDING BREAKFAST.

The approaching wedding of Mrs. Cavendish Jones gave rise to much conversation (if the perpetual clatter of words interchanged upon such occasions deserves the name) in the vicinity of Sloane Street. Like all other districts, whether west or east, within one or two miles of the Great Metropolis, it has the disadvantage of being divided into various cliques, where macaws disdain all knowledge of the parrot tribe, and they in their turn despise the little paroquet—forgetting they are all of the same family. In such neighbourhoods, people

generally depend for society on their town friends, and look with all becoming distrust and suspicion on their neighbours; taking it for granted there is no possibility of their being equal to themselves. Sometimes, indeed, visiting is brought about; particularly if there be many young people in the respective families, who meet in the streets and shopping, and make observations at church and chapel touching the material and fashion of bonnets, and the texture and cut of coats. If this investigation proceed in a satisfactory manner, something approaching a smile (the smile being very precise and never exceeding due bounds) is exchanged: two or three months more elapse, and to the smile is added a nod; in process of time comes the addition of a word; and, if the important matter of wealth (that master-key to respectability) is perfectly settled "as it should be," why, the carriage-and-pair condescends to return the call of the phaëton, and a cab will leave its card upon a stanhope.

The English are not the people to jump at a conclusion or into a friendship. Their shy-

ness and their pride are both at variance with hasty measures; yet it is but fair to say that, *once fixed,* they are not easily moved: they are honest, firm, and truthful in their attachments; but they are a grievously long time in forming them.

Mrs. Cavendish Jones had, however, been well introduced, and, consequently, what is termed well received, in the neighbourhood where she resided: that is to say, at stated periods of the year she helped to eat people's dinners and in due time they helped to eat hers; and then the "sexes," after sitting in a hot room for two or three hours, and doing as much in the eating way as they possibly could to extend Dr. Darling's practice, separated, like two ends of a circle, to meet again; the ladies withdrawing to sit bolt-upright on chairs in a chilly drawing-room, to look at each other's dresses, or inspect the albums and annuals — great helps to small-talk — until the gentlemen — who had been most industriously occupied in the interim, either in stupifying or vivifying them-

selves with hot sherry or cool claret—appeared. And while the caped and turbaned dowagers cut for partners with the stout elderly gentlemen, some young lady, with pink elbows and fingers to match, played and sung; while the junior gentlemen (after having declared they delighted in music, and only existed at the Opera) talked and other non-musical young ladies tittered. Then the carriages were announced, and the company curtseyed or bowed or stumbled themselves out; and the mistress of the house yawned, and declared she was glad it was over; and the poor self-satisfied people, one and all, went stupidly to bed, imagining, in their wearied ignorance, they had been *enjoying* society! What would the dinner-givers and dinner-eaters of that particular set have said if they were honestly told that they understood nothing of society—that society is an interchange of thoughts and feelings, and ever-continuing acts of kindness, and small generosities, with which dinners at Christmas and Easter, and dances in April and May, have no earthly connexion—that society

draws forth the essence of our best thoughts and brightest acquirements, and is a perpetual current of all that is delightful and good?

Now-and-then a stray star, rather on the wane, wandered into Mrs. Jones's sphere—a sort of lost pleiad, such as Lady Bab Hesketh, of ancient memory—and succeeded in throwing everything into disorder, without effecting the least good to any; and those who were the first, in its presence, to flatter the brilliancy of its rays, were the readiest, in its absence, to misinterpret its good-nature or eccentric flashes. The bride-elect, nevertheless, would have been but too happy to have had anything in the shape of a lion (intellectual, or otherwise) to give peculiar distinction to her wedding. Her thoughts reverted to Lady Bab, who, though *passée, had* been celebrated, and had been for some time forced (as far as her celebrity was concerned) to live upon its memory. But literary ladies, at that particular period, had just taken to foreign travel, and, having exhausted all ideas of their own and of their own country, thought it would be well to traffic

in the notions of others; Lady Bab had therefore gone, to renew her reputation, to the Alps, or the Rhine, or the States, or somewhere or other—perhaps, for aught poor Mrs. Jones could tell, to elongate a six weeks' tour into three goodly volumes—to pronounce upon the laws, habits, manners, and dispositions of a nation, containing many provinces and many millions of living souls, after a flight through their country which occupied, perhaps, a month or a little more. One thing was certain, that even Lady Bab was not to be had; and the next question was, therefore, who was? No one, indeed, except some threescore nobodies. But, then, Mrs. Cavendish Jones was resolved, as her footman said, "*not* to have no nobodies;" and, consequently, in her struggle to elevate certain nobodies, whom the distinction of a carriage, or even a well-liveried footman, in her estimation, dignified into something approaching a somebody, she affronted a whole tribe of nobodies, who, after waiting with some patience for their invitations, and being left out, rose up in arms at the idea of her pre-

suming to make a distinction. Then fast and thick came the observations—"Who was she indeed, that took such airs upon herself?—Who, indeed! She was ready enough to come to *their* house when she was asked—let her wait till she was asked again! And *who* was Mr. Trufit?—Indeed, they did not care to repeat all they heard, though they did hear a great deal. But who was he?—what were his connexions?—They should like to know that. Mrs. Cavendish Jones was never anything better than a fool. It was easy enough to see why *he* married *her*. Well, they were glad they were *not* asked to the wedding, for they hated giving pain, and they should have found it necessary to refuse: they could not think of going to associate with—they did not know who!"

Never had Miss Womble been so occupied, during her entire life of single blessedness, as during the three days prior to that which poor Mrs. Cavendish Jones had fixed upon as the finale to her free agency. Through the deep slimy mud of the King's Road—that everlasting road, which is always either in a state of

perpetual dust or perpetual dirt—did her gaunt figure tramp by morning and evening light; her voice echoing from house to house, wherever she obtained admittance, up Sloane Street and all the streets branching therefrom. Nor were the secret labyrinths of Old Brompton left unexplored—that place where antique houses, not modern-antique, but veritable old tiled dwellings, still abound, particularly in the neighbourhood of Gore Lane and Cromwell Lane, having their own green lawns, shaded by noble trees, oaks and limes and mulberries—those aristocrats of Nature's planting: into these holy shades did this spirit of evil glide, to utter all she could either learn or invent of a poor foolish woman's folly—who would never have been heard of, but for the importance bestowed on her well-gilded absurdities. It is really wonderful how much harm a badly-disposed gossiping woman can effect, particularly if she be mistress of the art of calumny. Some persons were too honest to countenance scandal—those Miss Womble inoculated with the poison of insinuation; others were too busy to attend to her stories—those

she did not weary with details, but stated a few broad facts, leaving them to draw their own conclusions. Some, however, listened to all particulars with insatiable curiosity; and then this instructress of the innocent portion of the community might be pronounced happy. To those she descanted on the benevolence of her own nature, on Marian's ingratitude, and on the enormity of her friend Mrs. Jones's conduct; and assured them that nothing but the regard she still entertained for "her poor, weak, lost friend," prevented her exposing *who* and *what* that villain Trufit was.

Still, great as Miss Womble's abilities decidedly were in the scandal line, she did not effect her purpose of preventing the invited from going to the wedding breakfast. Most industriously did the greater number of hearers while deprecating, still spread, the scandal—which, of course, lost nothing by the telling. All listened, all sneered, all condemned; yet, still, all the invited were there at the appointed time—all, except one very conscientious red-faced little gentleman, who went about declar-

ing he could not go from what he had heard; and everybody thought how very upright he was, and gave him credit for so much that was high-minded, to sacrifice a champaign breakfast to his conscience; when it turned out that, despite his insinuations, he had never been asked!

It would be difficult to tell whether the morning or the bride looked the most rosy. As orange blossoms were out of the question, a wreath of white roses were twined amid the flaxen ringlets of her wig, and the beautiful Brussels veil that over-shadowed them, was worthy of the highest admiration. The lawyer who drew up the marriage settlement acted the papa on the occasion, and Marian was to have been one of the bride's-maids, but she looked much too pretty, even in book-muslin, to come very near the ancient bride, who smiled, and simpered, and coquetted, to the disgust of the wise, and the amusement of the foolish.

It is a holy and a happy thing, to see a young woman led to the altar amid surrounding friends, by one worthy the entire affection of a spotless heart; many there are, too, who, from

various motives, marry in after life, and their bridals may not be unblest, though the chances of happiness are against those whose hearts were not knit together in early youth; still it is in their power to be respected and respectable, if they cast from them the affectation of a youthfulness which is gone for ever. A woman should learn to be mistress of herself, and to advance gracefully to meet her advancing years. It is not an easy task, and it is intimately connected with a mental dignity, of which such women as Mrs. Cavendish Jones are totally incapable. The bridegroom was boisterous and elated, elaborate in gold chains, and all that "Brummagum" sort of finery which gives to a vulgar Englishman the air of a bull-dog with a spangled riband around its neck. He was rather more civil to the bride's-maid than the bride desired; and when one particularly *good-natured* lady of the Mrs. Candour school, whispered that "were she her, she would keep Miss Marian out of the gentleman's sight;" the bride giggled, and exclaimed—"what, jealous of a *child*? Oh la!"

nevertheless, managing not to let "the child" be present at the ceremony, and managing, also, as foolish women can manage, to keep her even more than was convenient in the back-ground. At last the ceremony was over, the party returned, and the breakfast commenced, the bride and bridegroom sitting in the middle of the top table. The company seated, for once in a life the husband by his wife, and the wife by her husband;—it being a sort of society rule, as every body knows, that those whom God hath joined together should never be seen near each other; Mrs. Trufit affecting all the airs of a ruffled dove, and Mr. Trufit saying things as the champaign circulated which made the young ladies blush, and an old lady who sat at his left hand tap him frequently with her fan, and exclaim—"Fy, you naughty man!" Even then the company experienced various heart-burnings on the score of precedence. Mrs. De La Cressy, an heiress, who had married her dancing-master, having walked before Mrs. Langton, whose husband being a barrister, and living at 100 and

something, fancied she had a right to come into the room before Mrs. De La Cressy. These feelings increase and multiply immensely in the middle class of English society, which is always trying to push itself a step up the mighty ladder, whose height is both dizzy and dangerous.

At last the speaking began; Mr. Cook, a retired stock-broker, whose ideas, like the "Rialto," were always in a mist, and who was always saying exactly what ought to be omitted, rose to propose a toast, looking as odd, as rosy, and as bold as he had done on the night of Marian's christening. He had a slight impediment in his speech, yet proposed "the health of the beautiful and accomplished lady, who that day had honoured the gentleman on her right by adopting him into her affections; affections which all Sloane Street, ay, and Cadogan Place would have contested for (hear, hear from the young men of the company). He had been accustomed to address bulls and bears (he hoped they would pardon his jocularity), but addressing such an assembly was

beyond his powers. He remembered a meeting on a similar occasion in that very house!" Here the now antique Miss Sophy, knowing her papa's awkward habit of reverting to what people always wished to forget, pulled him by the sleeve, and whispered be must not speak of poor dear Mr. Jones now; and so taking the hint, he said, "he remembered a meeting on an almost similar occasion, he meant a christening" (cries of shame! shame)! He "begged to say he never insinuated anything shameful; a christening that proved the benevolence, the beauty, the generosity of Mrs. Jones, he begged her pardon, Mrs. Trufit's heart; and no one who had the happiness to look at the blooming and lovely girl at the side-table (all eyes were turned upon poor Marian, whose proud blood rushed to her cheeks), but must feel the truth of what he said." Mrs. Trufit bowed and put her handkerchief to her eyes. "He had wandered from his purpose, but who could resist wandering with such a temptation? He begged to propose the health and happiness of his long-known friend he believed he had

known her *thirty years*" (cries of no, no, no, from all parts of the room). Upon which the bride rose, and simpered forth, "that, indeed, her esteemed friend, Mr. Cook, was right, quite right, *he had known her when she was in long clothes!*" Upon which the stupid old man added: "that he would not take the liberty of saying that his friend ever wore short clothes, she was always dressed as a lady ought to be; he begged to propose her health, happiness, and many returns of the day to her."

Toasts are always drank enthusiastically when the champaign is good, and good it was; and after the bridegroom had returned thanks, a friend of Mr. Trufit's, remarkable for a superabundance of curled whiskers and a huge head of hair, eulogised Mr. Trufit, and insinuated that he was a prize that had smitten the hearts of, at least, half the ladies in Europe; which made the bridegroom declare that his friend's praise made him quite nervous, and that even if that was the case, he ought not to speak of it so publicly; it might get abroad and hurt the feelings of those, who, in

short, whom—in fact—the truth was, it was too delicate a subject to touch upon—the reputation of lovely women! A man could not always make up his mind, it required something beyond mere beauty—beyond—in fact, beyond the beyonds! His friends would understand him, when he told them it required "THAT to fix him!" And he threw back the veil from the face of his ancient bride; at that moment the sun's rays fell upon the wrinkles, and rouge, and pearl powder, and satin, and lace, and jewels of the vain, foolish woman, and showed her like a whited sepulchre in the eyes of all; and as she looked up and simpered in her husband's face, the effect was sickening, and Marian heard Doctor Darling mutter "hugh" between his teeth, and her heart was very sorry, for she remembered she had been her friend when she was a helpless infant; and tears came so quickly to her eyes, that to conceal them she was obliged to leave the room.

The object was unfortunately, as it often is, unworthy the emotion it excited. Marian sat down upon the top stair leading to the bed-

rooms, and the noise and mirth of the revelry ascended in all its wildness. There were still toasts necessary to be proposed, and others to be invented by those who, never having spoken before, were anxious not to lose such an opportunity. Healths were drunk, and it was wonderful how the gentlemen eulogised each other; they appeared to have been recently on a voyage of discovery amongst their acquaintances, and to have returned with an extraordinary store of knowledge as to their virtues and good qualities.

Somebody proposed somebody's health, because he was the friend of his oldest friend. You might have supposed that all the speakers were the most modest men in the world, and those of whom they spoke the most exemplary for virtue and talent; and when the first set of speeches were ended, and the bride with her blushing attendants had gone forth, that she, as lady of the ascendant, might put on her travelling dress, the elderly people found that listening to speeches was hungry work, and set too again at the feast; and then there was

more wine, and a more confused school of eloquence succeeded: for some who tried could not speak at all; others, again, became pathetic; not a few whispered scandal, and observed, that though the bride was ready to depart, the bridegroom lingered behind.

"Marian, child!" said the newly wed, while she arrayed the ostrich plume that nodded in her bonnet; "Marian, I shall be away a fortnight; I have left you a few things to do in my absence; can you repeat them?"

"I have written them out, Ma'am," said Marian, "lest I should forget. All the carpets taken up, beat, and put down again; all the beds taken down and put up; all the rooms scoured; all the windows cleaned; all the furniture turned; all the books in the library catalogued; all your things arranged and repaired; seven new songs copied, and to get up my practice of all the music Mr. Trufit marked; twenty-four pair of silk stockings to be marked with your name in full, in hair; and all the table-linen and sheeting to be remarked in blue marking thread. I believe,

Ma'am, that is all!" said Marian, when she had finished the catalogue.

"Yes, I think, all I directly mentioned; but there will be many little odd jobs to do, that you can find out, and, remember, I hold you responsible for all the servants' faults. I prove my returned confidence, by leaving everything at your command; the servants are on board wages, and you have the same allowance (Marian felt the blood tingle to her finger ends), but mind the keys, and *don't be extravagant.* Dear, oh dear, how highly I regard you, to think of your little comforts at such a time!"

The bride made no uncommon mistake. We frequently imagine we are arranging for the comforts of others, when, in fact, we are consulting only our own convenience. The world never deceives us, as we deceive ourselves.

Mrs. Trufit's maid announced that the carriage was ready.

"And must I see all the people off, and do the honors?" inquired the trembling girl,

clinging for a moment to the queen-like purple velvet pelisse, that enveloped the bride.

"Yes, to be sure; how kind I am to give you an opportunity! Keep away, and do not crush the folds of my dress—the bride's-maids will be here for an hour or two." "Dear, how I tremble!" How selfish you are at such a time to think of yourself!"

Poor Marian shrank into the corner nearest the drawing-room door. The gentlemen friends of the party, thoroughly "exhilarated," or "excited" (as it has become the fashion to call men when they so far forget their dignity as to become much the worse for wine), gave the bride three cheers as she entered the carriage, the mob outside echoed it back with interest, and then after the carriage drove off, some of them knocked at the door to know if they were to get nothing for shouting! A certain and abundant quantity of wine had been left; but this did not satisfy those who, having got the house to themselves, resolved to make a day of it. There was an outcry for more, and fortu-

nate was it for Marian that Doctor Darling had remained; prompted by the kindness of his own heart, and feeling that a young girl like Marian would be very unfitted to be there alone, when all but the thoughtless and reckless had departed.

The young maid's feelings had, indeed, been sufficiently shocked by hearing the observations which many of the departing guests passed upon their host and hostess. There was hardly one amongst them who did not sneer at and ridicule the unfortunate giver of the feast. It was a melancholy glimpse at what poor Marian then thought "great society." Some did not even seem to think it worth while to conceal their sentiments before her. One old lady, whose face looked like the face of an old cracked picture—so worn-out had it been with paint and varnish—in revenge for a look of indignation which flashed, despite herself, from poor Marian's eyes, at some rude observation she made upon the ancient bride, asked her, very unfeelingly, "what she intended to do now that her protectress was

married?—she won't like such as you near her gay husband, I 'm sure," she added, while her voice screamed into a hysteric laugh. Happily Dr. Darling came to her relief.

"Miss Marian will suffer me to choose her a husband when I think her old enough," said the Doctor; "she intends to do that, I 'm sure. My dear girl," he continued, when the lady was gone, "I 've been watching you during the last half-hour, and your face is a sad tell-tale: I have read in its expression pages on pages of scorn and anger at the meanness which can enjoy a feast and slander the giver of it. But it is the way of the world, and you will get used to it in time."

"I hope not, Sir! Oh, Sir, I thought there would be a great deal in the world to love; but, if this is the world—if all the people here be like the people elsewhere—I would rather sit at the feet of that poor melancholy Miss Kitty and darn stockings."

"No, no!—the world is not altogether so peopled, my dear child," said the Doctor, smiling, and somewhat revived at the truthful

earnestness of Marian; whose fresh thoughts were as cheering to the spirit of the world-worn man as a mountain breeze is to the brow of a parched citizen. "No; you have seen bad, mean, half-caste specimens of society—the very worst you could see; but you must keep your eye still and not knit your brow. If you cannot make friends, avoid making foes, my dear—avoid making foes. The companion, the pet, even, of a fanciful lady, cannot afford to make foes. Indeed I cannot—could not, rather—for *now* I *could* do as I please. I lost one patient when I was a very young man, by speaking the whole truth: I never dealt it out in such large doses afterwards. You shall come and spend a day, my dear, with Mrs. Darling before the bride and bridegroom return; she will do you good."

Marian's heart beat at the idea of a tranquil, happy day; but then she remembered all that Mrs. Trufit had left her actually to do, besides the little hint about "odds and ends;" and, with a lip quivering with disappointment, she

answered, " that, when she had done all Mrs. Trufit desired, she would be but too happy."

The Doctor had shown much attention to the foundling-girl, considering that he was a clever man of the world. Capable, as such men are, of many kindly acts, but seldom of solid friendship; he had pitied her, left to perform a task beyond her strength and knowledge, and, as an old friend, managed to clear the house even of its new master's extraordinary acquaintances; but he did not repeat the invitation he had given.

We once heard an anecdote of a person—a reduced gentleman—who never enjoyed but one holiday during the entire year, and that was Christmas-day. Whenever Christmas-day fell on a Sunday he fretted the entire twelve months—*his* one prospect of enjoyment—the oasis in *his* desert—was destroyed. Marian had the hope of one happy day—a day spent in the house of one who had known her all her life—who never treated her either with contempt or harshness—who had always met her with a

smile; but, when his carriage rolled away, the hope went with it. She knew it was a matter of no consequence to him, and that he had forgotten it. Again her heart sank within her.

Nothing is more depressing than the remnants of festivity where festivity has been. The evening had closed in: there was no group to gather round the domestic hearth, and talk, with mingled tears and smiles, about the beloved sister, or the dear absent child, whose life had been so useful as to secure a certainty of her being idolized by her new connexions. No! The waiters, more than half-tipsy, were quarrelling with the whole-tipsy footman, who, like the "Dog in Office," took upon his small self the whole load of "brief authority." The remains of the feast were strewn in disgusting disorder over the tables; the confectioner's men were looking after dishes and hired plate, complimenting the housemaid, who stood near the door with a candlestick in her hand, across which the candle swung, though it was stuck in carelessly with a bit of doubled paper; and, fond as the pretty housemaid was

of compliments, she was too worn-out to pay them the attention they deserved. There were many gaping idlers still outside the door; and their next-door neighbours, who *had not* been invited to the feast, were still at the windows, determined to know "for a surety" how many rout-seats had been hired, and how many baskets the confectioner put in his van. So great was the confusion that even the kitchen cat made its way up-stairs.

At last the hall-door was locked; and the pretty housemaid good-naturedly thought she would look into Miss Marian's room to see if she was in bed. She was not; and then the pretty housemaid, after wondering why she was not there, and being almost too sleepy to look where she was, determined to try if she could find her.

Marian had gone into the library. There, with the moonlight full upon it, hung the portrait of poor Mr. Jones. It smiled on her—she thought it did—placidly and gently, as he had often done. Memory went back to the time when she used to climb his knee and play bob-

cherry there. She could not call to mind that he had ever used one harsh or unkind phrase towards her. He had never said anything sensible enough to remember as a whole, but many affectionate words rang in her ear. Her spirits and strength were alike worn out. She had almost unknowingly despised those she had met; and she contrasted them with the gentle, quiet, honest, upright man, who smiled on her from that canvas, though he was forgotten where he had lived so long. Tears gushed from her eyes; and then she fell on her knees before the picture, and, hiding her face in her hands, sobbed bitterly. How long she wept she could not tell; for, as if her childhood had not yet passed, she fell asleep while the tears were wet upon her cheek.

"To think of that, now!" said the pretty housemaid, as she awoke her. "Poor thing! she is quite worn out."

The housemaid was fresh from the country, or she would have had but little sympathy with her mistress's dependant.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DEPENDANT'S TRIALS.

MARIAN had only seen her nurse once during Mrs. Trufit's absence, for poor Mrs. Macane had been ill. All her tasks were done; and, though she was not praised, she was not blamed. About a week after the return of the bride and bridegroom, Katty contrived an interview with her "darlint."

"Ye'r back agin now, my jewel!" she said; "ye'r back; and sure, if you had any sense, you'd have had the *length of her fut* long ago. And as to him—I don't know what to say of him, and the less you have to do with him the better. I'm an ould woman *alannan!* and I'll tell you an observation I've made so often that I'm sure of its truth now—the way to keep in with the quality *is to make yourself useful.* There, now, ye toss yer head, and look scornful! That won't do, my darlint child.

I fostered the pride too much in ye in yer infancy, and I couldn't help it; but it was wrong, avourneen! and foolish, and maybe you'll curse me for it?"

"No, nurse, no; if you did make me a proud child, I have had enough to pull it down."

"And yet it's as high up as ever at this moment," observed Katty. Look at the stand of ye—yer head thrown back, yer eye bright, yer neck arched like a young war-horse. Oh, my grief! A penniless girl should have a dim, immoveable eye, and a stoop in her shoulders, ready to bear the burdens the world puts upon poverty."

"There are many," said Marian, "not born to fortune who achieve it."

"Anan?" ejaculated Katty, opening her mouth.

"Make it," said Marian.

"Why, thin—God bless my soul and body!" exclaimed Katty eagerly, clasping her hands firmly together, and then letting them fall, in an attitude of extreme attention, "stand a

little more in the shadow of the bottle-drainer, and tell me how."

"*Stand a little more in the shadow of the bottle-drainer*"—what a situation for a heroine! But the fact was, that though Katty had found it impossible to "*get round*" Mrs. Trufit, she had "got round" the groom, and obtained admittance through the stable into the back garden of the dwelling, and so into the back area, where she summoned her favourite to the unromantic meeting.

"Tell you how, Nurse?—If I did you would not understand me."

"Very pretty, upon my word! Is it because I have no head upon my shoulders? And why not?"

"Oh, because you could not. I have had a good education; during the last year I have taught a great deal—hard though it was, it did me good—and I would a thousand times rather earn my own bread than be a dependant upon stinted bounty grudgingly bestowed.

"Earn yer own bread," repeated her nurse,

mournfully shaking her head; "earn yer own bread, my darlint? Pretty bread-earners these are!" And she held Marian's small white hands up in the sunshine.

"I do not mean by manual labour," said Marian, smiling at the oddity of Katty's action; "there are other ways by which a woman, a gentlewoman, can earn her bread."

"Is it by dress-making—making the crooked straight, and the lean fat, as a body may say—you mean?"

Marian's blood mounted to her cheek, for her nurse had truly said that she was proud.

"No."

"Nor trying to make the ugly handsome aud the ould young, by millinery?

"No, no."

"It can't be no kind of shopkeeping, then, I am sure."

"I will be a governess," said Marian, triumphantly; "great women have been teachers, I have heard Miss Kitty say—great and good women. Kings must have teachers; Queens must have governesses."

Katty Macane compressed her lips and elevated her brows.

"To go a governessing is looking at the world through the back windows, a chora machree! I never heard such folly! To be, as a body may say, between hawk and buzzard; too low for the drawing-room, too high for the kitchen; belonging neither to the earth beneath, nor the heavens above; slighted by the mistress; insulted by the servants; winked at by the gentlemen visitors, and shook-off by the lady ones; blamed for the faults of the children; barked at by the dogs, scratched by the cats; a thing without a place; a free woman, treated as a born slave. Listen to me, avourneen. I have known at home and abroad, big and little, thirteen governesses in my time; twelve were born miserable, and were always kept so; the thirteenth was lucky; *for she died in her first place.* 'Och, Alanna! God break hard fortune before any woman's child—I'd rayther, or as soon, see you in yer grave, as going a governessing."

"Better than living a dependant," said Marian, still more proudly, "anything better than that."

"Now listen to me. Ye'r too young yet to dream of such a thing, for if ye war a rock o' sense, and a tree o' wisdom, which I never knew gentle or simple to be at your age, my precious darling, stately as ye'r looking—setting a case you war all I say—did you ever know a governess, who if she worked the brain out of her head—let alone her fingers to the bone, wasn't considered a dependant?"

"She earns her income," persisted Marian, "she gives her talents for her employer's money; one could not do without the other."

"Och, good-morrow to ye, my lady!" exclaimed Katty, with the bitterness of a woman who knows the world; "ye've read *that* in some romance. Look in the newspapers—though, indeed, it's better ye didn't. I, that have been a camp follower for many a year—sarved under the Duke (God keep him in health, and strength, and happiness, and glory, which he can't fail to be in, to the end

of his days, and longer, seeing he's taken the shine out of Bonyparte and Marlboro', whose fine place is close to where the big-boys goes to school—Oxford they call it)—well, I never looks at a paper on account of the wakeness in my eyes, and the pot-boy not lending me the loan of one, barrin' on Sundays, on account of the small drop of beer I take; and then I see so much badness in it, that I'm glad it's a Sunday I see it, for it can't be so bad that day as any other; and, indeed, there's nothing on a paper much worse than advertisements for teachers, where they are expected to be the most edicated and wonderful of God's crayturs —with every quality of angels—French and Latin, and algebra, and music, and to have the charge of only five or six children, and needle-work, and hard-work, and wardrobe work, and the Devil knows what—and then, at the heel of the hunt comes in, *that as it's a comfortable situation, no salary the first year.*"

Marian laughed at her nurse's picture; but she had built her own castle, and resolved, poor girl, to inhabit it the first opportunity.

She remembered, to be sure, that Miss Kitty was a slave; but then, Marian was personally inexperienced, and we always begin life with the belief that we must be more fortunate than our neighbours. She also trusted to her proficiency in music, which had never been so much praised as lately; and hope and pride combined to make her think very highly of her acquirements, at all events as far as music was concerned.

"I will make a fortune, Nurse, depend upon it," she said, with the bravery of a hopeful mind: "I would rather *make* ten pounds than have a hundred given to me—and then you shall live with me, dear, dear Nurse."

"How long are we both to live on the ten pounds? Oh, thin, God bless you, my bird o' paradise, for ye'r not like the same as when you used to be marching at Miss Womble's tail, with the poor, pale, stiff young ladies who never sat on anything asier than an *education chair*—God forgive her! There's a young look come to yer face now, like spring after winter. Tell me the truth, Marian, jewel of

my heart! Now, honour bright; does none of the ladies and gentlemen upstairs tell ye *on the sly*,—(for Mrs. Cavendish Trufit wouldn't like to hear it now, I know, that she's acting bride, and would like to have the beauty as well as the finery to herself,)—that ye'r handsome?"

Mary blushed. "Well a-lannan," continued the nurse, "I don't tell ye not to b'lieve it, because the glass, that I'm sure ye settled these curls at, would give me the lie; but, Cora ma chree! *don't think too much of it*, for it's God's gift, and a thing we've no hand in, or we'd all turn out beauties: keep the pride down, my blessing, and never take pride to yourself out of God's works; and remember what I tould ye at the first going off—that the more useful the poor do be, the more the rich like 'em. There's a true saying in the Church catechism—Mr. Jones (rest his soul, I pray God!) used to tache ye, 'to do your duty in that state of life to which it shall please God to call you;' there's thruth in *that*—fine, holy thruth; and he has called you to a state of

dependence, for the present, my jewel, only for the present—keep up, and wait patiently; patience 's a fine thing. That's a mighty purty frock ye have on," continued Katty, growing anxious to change the conversation; "more than half silk, any way, and becomes ye to the life: it is quite a beauty, quite the thing, and ye'r quite straight now—keep the tears out of yer eyes, and, like a dear, take it asy, and believe its only for the present—you can't tell (barrin' ye were a conjuror) the luck that's in store for you—it's a lady you may be yet."

Marian drew herself up: the movement did not escape the quick-sighted nurse: "I see," she added, "you think ye'r that already—a lady I mean, if you marry a lord."

"I will never marry to be dependant on my husband," said the proud girl.

"It's a pity ye didn't spake in time and have a man made a purpose for you," said the nurse, laughing. "Why, Lord love ye, as the men go, and the laws have gone in every country where the men had the making of them—if a woman has to bring her husband a

cart-load of goold—put eyes and brains in his head, *as many does,* (not that I mean any disrespect to my dear dead husband,)—a tongue in his head, and set him up for good and all—still, if he was the greatest ass in Christian land, he'd think, and everybody else would think, his wife dependant on him. Sure, they have it their own way—it's the men and the laws, and the laws and the men all through, and no mention at all of the women, no more than if they wer'n't in it, *though sometimes we let them know to the contrary*—but it's time enough for ye to be thinking of a husband, even if he was a lord. 'One trouble at a time,' said the girl, 'if you please,' when both a bur and a bramble stuck in her gown."

"I wish you had a warmer cloak, dear nurse."

"Never heed the cloak," replied Katty, folding it round her, "it was good once, and that's more than can be said of the bride upstairs; and the bridegroom, no great shakes; what could she expect? But may-be I ought not to say that to you?"

"He has been very kind to me, Nurse," responded Marian, "and I can laugh now without being checked; and, indeed, *she* is kinder than ever."

"Than ever you remember, child. Oh, if you would only promise yer poor nurse that you'd try and put up with what you may get, and keep silent and quiet, and not look as ye used when only two years old—thunder and lightning the Mistress used to call it *then*, and laugh at it: but what does at two, won't do at fifteen; and what's charming in a favourite, is disagreeable in one not loved. Well, I've done praching—only, don't now, don't gainsay the young Masther, nor the ould Misthress; don't, my darlint! Put up with anything for a while, and do nothing without letting me know; the groom 'ill bring me any word. Keep a good heart, alannan: I've often tould ye *there's a silver lining to every cloud.*" And she kissed, over and over again, the white hands which trembled in hers. "Keep a good heart, and that goes a great way towards taching a body content, and the like; and content

is a fine, wise thing, a thing that turns bitter to sweet. Sure there's a heaven above us all; and sure, if there's a heaven there must be a God, for it couldn't come there of itself, no more nor anything else—well, what are ye smiling at; sure I had ever and always a way of my own of spaking—only ye've got beyont me in the book-larning, and music, and in all sorts of wisdom, *barring that every-day sort that pays turnpike on all roads*— that's what it is; and ye'll be looking down on yer poor nurse, *aye*, that will be the end of it, I'll go bail—you'll be looking down on yer poor nurse."

"Oh! fie, Nurse! Could I ever do that to you, who have been my friend, my own true and constant friend — ever since — since — since——"

And the blushes which had previously risen to Marian's cheeks were as faded roses, compared with the crimson which flushed them when unable to utter the agonizing truth—she looked down and trembled.

"Since you war born, *a-vourneen*, you would say," observed the affectionate nurse.

"No, Nurse; I would not say an untruth. I did not mean that; I meant, since I was *found*—found," she repeated bitterly, "like a stray kitten or a drowned cur, without name, or fame, or friend, or—or *parent*, to mark me, to own me, to care for me—Oh! why was I born to be made the castaway, the sneer, the jest, the foot-ball of every one who chooses to insult the poor defenceless foundling?"

Marian threw herself on her nurse's neck in a passion of tears, and Katty seemed as astonished as unprepared for such a burst of feeling: it was what she could not understand.

"Who put this in yer head, my violet?" she said; "who put this in yer head? a chora machree! was you and hould up! ye'r just like a lily steeped in the May-dew—I little thought such-like was harbouring in yer mind; plague take it for a mind! What a many things gets into it, avourneen! It's as wonderful as Him that made it, and then furnished it. Sure it was the will o' God, my precious! and why should ye fly in His face

that-a-way? No one looks down on ye, Marian—no one."

"There is no one who does *not* look down on me," replied Marian, drying her eyes, while her lip curled more proudly than ever with a scorn she could not define, and which cannot be described; "*that* is what you would say, Nurse, or what you ought to say. But, it's no matter; I will make myself a name—I am determined to do so, one of these days."

"Anan!" exclaimed the Nurse, again opening her eyes.

"I will; I have often thought of it. But you do not understand me—I hardly understand myself, only I know that I will not always remain a poor and buffeted dependant. Do not look sadly on me, Nurse—look on me cheerfully. You'll be proud of me yet, Nurse Macane—as proud as you are fond. Good bye! good bye!"

"Don't go yet," said the poor woman, whose affectionate heart yearned for more last words; "tell me, have ye no things that want mend-

ing—no fine things to be got up—no work of any kind I can do for ye? No marking, or stitching, or anything of the sort that I can help? Do tell me. I've got such beautiful bran new spectacles—I can see like a fairy, God bless us! And, besides that, I want to hear from you, darling, how they get on with the cooking. It's a fine range and a good oven, no excuse for careless dressing—beautiful range, I call it, and all convaniencies. The late masther—Heaven be his bed!—had a fine taste that way; he was a knowledgeable man—of one not born to it; there was a pleasure in cooking for him—a rale pleasure—he knew what he had before him. But you don't remember him in his best days. Lord, how he would eat! He'd make nothing of anything, and carve like an angel. Now tell me, darlint, has the young master any taste that way—any rale knowledge, or even a turn for it?" inquired Katty, with evident anxiety to ascertain the fact.

"I don't know; I don't think he has," replied Marian, carelessly.

"Poor, ignorant craythur! where would he get it?" she exclaimed, contemptuously. "And they agree?"

"Nurse, Nurse, you would not have me be an informer, would you?" said Marian, indignantly.

"No, no, my dear," replied Katty; "I didn't mean that, at all at all, only you are grown high and testy, and grand—mighty grand. I don't know how it is, but you are harsh—no, I don't mean that, so don't look at me with dark reproach in your eyes—*only you are grown mighty soon from a child into a woman.*"

Katty's opinion was correct, Marian *had* grown very quickly from a child into a woman —*sprung*, rather; and, like all precocious girls, her feelings ripened more quickly than her judgment.

Katty Macane returned to her small lodging on Chelsea Common, in a state of extreme perplexity. She could not make out what had come over "the child." She hoped she wasn't going to turn out a discon-

tented body—that would be worse than all, for then she'd neither have nor give peace. She seemed to have every comfort in life about her, yet she was not content. What could she want? She hadn't any bother with books, and she had beautiful clothes, by all accounts; what could a young girl want more?

Such was Nurse Macane's argument, though at times her knowledge of human nature told her that something more was necessary to constitute real happiness.

It must be confessed that, for the first six months after Mrs. Cavendish Jones became Mrs. Cavendish Trufit, Marian's position was far more agreeable than it had been at school, though it had its moments, nay, its hours, of misery. The antiquated bride languished upon her gilded chairs and sofas, in white, and blue, and rose-coloured satin, and blonde, and flaxen ringlets flowing over rouge and pearl powder; and Marian was useful in amusing her friends, playing and singing, to prevent the fatigue of conversation, and bear her scoldings, and, what was worse, her *sotto voce*

repinings: besides, she fell back on her old resource of sympathy, and Marian's music or Marian's handwriting were seldom praised, without her extracting large dole of cummin and aniseed in behalf of her own exquisite benevolence.

Mr. Trufit had long ago voted matrimony "a very ridiculous bore," and Mrs. Trufit hinted occasionally, in a half-whining, half-playful tone, at the change and inconstancy of man; but Marian maintained an honourable silence on all their differences, and caused Katty more than once to express her astonishment as to where she got the wonderful feeling of goodness entirely, to say nothing of the sense that was in her.

Mrs. Trufit had not improved in either generosity or gentleness; but, as we have said, she found Marian useful, and, from having experienced so much harshness in former times, likely to overrate any passing courtesy she might obtain. She was of too elevated a mind to be suspicious of kindness; though few would have so termed the capricious treatment she

daily and hourly received from *her patroness.* Marian was not humbled; on the contrary, she was dangerously exalted in her own opinion, for she felt her superiority over those with whom she lived; and not all the information Mrs. Trufit delicately bestowed upon her, as to her utter and hopeless dependence, could alter the quiet dignity of her step, or the confidence she was daily learning to repose in herself.

Gentle reader, if you, being poor, should have the blessing of a beautiful child, and this child should attract the attention of a vain, capricious woman of fashion, and she should offer to "*patronise* it"—that is, bring it forward as an ornament to attract attention to the otherwise unheard-of benevolence of her heart, or to draw to her compliments on her taste and discernment—better for you to take that girl, and, clothing her in simple russet, send her to honest, business-like industry, where she can earn the sweet and wholesome food of labour, than intrust her to the capricious smiles of those whose hearts have been eaten away by the canker of folly, selfishness,

and caprice. Blessed, doubly blessed, is the voice of a friend in a poor dwelling; but the step of *patronage* sounds heavy on the ear as the clank of the fetter and the chain; its bread is bitter to the taste, and its gilded cup poisoned. Every sphere of life may be filled with happiness; but let not ambition tempt the humbly born to endure the slavery born of *patronage*.

Mrs. Trufit had for many weeks, when little more than a year of her newly-wedded life had expired, appeared more restless, more peevish, more discontented, than was even her wont. Mr. Trufit was seldom at home—*very* seldom; and, when he was, quarrels became more constant and more violent. Although Marian might be termed the safety-valve by which the wife's ill-temper frequently escaped, still Marian's pity and generosity were so strongly excited, that they repressed the sharp retort or sullen displeasure which otherwise would have hastened her dismissal from the house of bondage.

It was evident to her that Mr. Trufit thought the whole of the foolish woman's fortune would

have hardly purchased the right she had acquired to bear his name and to support his insults. "Kittens" was changed to "Cats," and frequently "Old Cats," in his familiar vocabulary; and what under-bred persons, in their rude exaltation, are fond of terming "honesty" and "sincerity," Mrs. Trufit felt, and not unrepiningly, to be cruel mockery and positive rudeness. It was piteous to see her, when this knowledge came so painfully upon her, as she sat in her over-filled and over-gorgeous drawing-room—the course of her bitter tears marked in the glowing rouge which hardly concealed her withered cheek, while her eyes, fixed upon the splendid carpet or the gilded ceiling, seemed spent and worn out with weeping. Her very fault-finding began to lack spirit: the shrewish voice was subdued to a whimper; the deep and keen authority of tone dwindled into a sickly lamentation, with an occasional outbursting of the virago when Mr. Trufit's careless extravagance or coarse injustice called it forth. More than once had Marian seen her take a small picture of Mr.

Cavendish Jones from her cabinet, cry over and talk to it in a tone of weak tenderness; and then she would kiss it, and replace it in its concealment, if her young husband's step but sounded on the stair. This was not all: Mr. Trufit had resolved to make her yield even the little she had retained at her own disposal; and as his necessities—sure offspring of vice and dissipation—increased, so did his determination to force from her the slender stipend, the sole provision of her declining years. Change in affection there was none, because affection had never existed, but there was an evident change in circumstances.

One night Marian had exhausted all her arts of pleasing (those who are constrained to please ever feel as if they lacked the means to do so); she had quilled her patroness a new *tour de tête,* invented expressly for the purpose of concealing the junction between the real and false hair; she had gauffred a frill; she had oiled her curls; she had played her favourite waltzes, and practised a new quadrille; she had gone to the fruiterer's to select some raisins; she had been called

stupid and idle and ill-tempered before the grinning servants, and had bitten her lips to enforce silence to insults she dared not reply to; she had made some blanc-mange, attempted to clear obstinate opaque jelly, and been called from it to attend to some trifling alteration in the pinning of a riband or the trimming of a shoe, by which means the blanc-mange was spoiled and the jelly left to run cold—for servants always make common cause against an humble companion, particularly if she be honest and independent. Finally, she undressed Mrs. Trufit; and then, while she tried on various nightcaps, and wailed and moaned and egotized, was obliged to half-dress her again, as she declared her bed was ill-made, and Marian must remake it; then she ordered her to sing her asleep. Marian commenced with a lullaby; but no, *that* would not do. How could Marian suppose she could be sung to sleep like common people, particularly common stage-people, who always go to sleep to a lullaby? No, she could go to sleep to nothing that was not light and animating; and the

poor girl was forced to suffocate her feelings and sing the song of mirth in the region of misery. When her tormentor was fairly asleep, instead of going, as a servant could, to her regular repose, poor Marian was obliged to return to the narrow precincts of what the fantastic lady called her "boudoir"—a back-room within a back-room—and there write various letters and orders which she had been directed to despatch "the first thing in the morning." Her young eyes ached, her cheek was blanched, yet, long after the clock struck one, she commenced her task. All the servants, except the footman, had gone to bed, and he waited for his master. She had known that her only real friend—her poor Irish nurse—had watched the entire day to see her, and she had cried more than once at the impossibility of meeting her faithful friend.

Her fingers performed their almost mechanical operation, while tear after tear dropped upon her hand. "I would not bear it," she exclaimed, as a torrent of painful recollections crowded on her remembrance—"I would not

bear it, but that she has no other to serve her faithfully in the whole world but me; and she was kind to me in my childhood—she *was* kind to me in my childhood." And then she continued her task until the loud knocking of Mr. Trufit and a continuation of louder talking in the hall assured her that "the master" had returned; presently she heard the sound of several footsteps ascend to the front drawing-room, and then Mr. Trufit say to the servant. "All gone to bed?—cook gone to bed?—curse her! Call her up, and let her hunt out the larder, bring the tray up here! What no candles—no fire?"

"I will fetch candles, Sir, and I suppose there is a fire in my Mistress's boudoir, as Miss Marian is there."

Mr. Trufit took the candle from the footman's hand, and, having done so, half reeled—half walked, followed by his companions, into the little room where Marian, trembling she knew not why, was occupied with her pen.

"Have you got the keys?" he inquired, in the thick, inarticulate tone of drunkenness.

"No, Sir."

"Then go and get them."

"Yes, Sir, but"——replied Marian, rising.

"What but—what do you mean?"

"Mrs. Trufit has been very unwell, Sir, all day, and she is only now gone to sleep—must I disturb her?"

"Why, to be sure you must; that's not bad, faith, marry an old woman and then be asked not to disturb her; the keys of the cellar; the keys of all things that have keys; there go my girl, trip;—what do you stand for? Are you afraid to take the leap, afraid of Old Cats, eh? Look at her, Master Peronett, don't marry, to be a hen-pecked husband; don't you see *she's* afraid—that girl who's here to do as she's bid —to disobey me in my own house, because of an old wife!"

The person addressed as Master Peronett was a tall, slight, gentlemanly-looking youth; his eyes and hair were dark, his brow low, pale, and broad. There was nothing in the features that any one could find fault with, and yet their entire expression was displeasing.

His mouth was well-shaped, yet at times it was painful to look at; at others, when pleasure or good-temper sat on the full, parted lips it was positively beautiful.

Marian lit a taper, and proceeded slowly upstairs.

Mrs. Cavendish was already awake, holding a bottle of hartshorn in one hand and a white pocket handkerchief in the other.

"He's drunk of course," said she, while Marian stood at the door,—"of course the brute is drunk?"

"Mr. Trufit desired I would ask you for the key of the cellar," replied Marian, evading the question.

"And how dare you come to me with such a message?" exclaimed the lady. "Why are you not in bed?"

"I was finishing those letters, Ma'am," answered the dependant.

"It's false! You were waiting up by his orders to torment me, and see the fellows he brings to the house, you forward minx!"

Marian looked indignant and her figure dilated, but she made no reply.

"Are you going to remain up there till starting time?" shouted a voice from below—"Bring the keys!"

"Do send the keys, dear Madam, indeed you had better send them, Mr. Trufit seems so angry," said Marian.

"I shall do no such thing!" replied the wife. "I have been humble, and gentle, and self-sacrificing enough already—I have borne too much—I'll bear no more—I will *not* send them; go and say so!"

"There is a stranger with him, a mere youth, and many besides: will it not look odd? You do not know how very strange Mr. Trufit is; better send them.

"What, you leagued against me! Oh you viper!"

Mr. Trufit's voice again ascended with a loud and bitter curse—and another demand for the keys.

"Why do you not go?" she repeated, violently stamping her foot.

Marian left the room; as she descended she heard Mrs. Trufit bolt the door, and in another moment encountered the gentleman on the stairs—he held out his hand.

"Well, where are they? Where are the keys? What, not got 'em? I'll go myself this time. There's Bob and Hollytop will be here in ten minutes, and whatever comes I'll not be laughed at by them, I promised them a carouse—be laughed at by them for the sake of an old fool." And he staggered against Marian, stumbled over the top stair, and fell against the door.

"Steady, steady," he muttered to himself; "here, Filly, hold the light, will ye? Those cursed housemaids never fasten in the rods properly: you might see to that, I think; do something for your feed, eh? the devil a thing you do but dress yourself and the old one."

Marian felt her blood rebel, but she said to herself "He would not have said that had he been sober."

"Come, Kittens, give me the keys, old girl!"

This was said aloud, and then came the muttering. "Kittens, pretty Kitten!—What a fool I was to throw myself away!—The keys. Come, I know you are awake—heard you winneying to the filly. I tell you what it is"—— Then he paused longer than drunken men pause in general—"I know you are awake. Kittens—puss—pretty puss!" Then his tone deepened into ferocity, and he exclaimed, "Cats! old Cats!—Now look, Madame Cavendish Trufit, if you don't open the door in three claps, I'll burst it open."

He waited for some reply, but the foolish and obstinate woman continued silent.

All this time Marian was trembling on the ower landing; for she had laid the taper on a bracket and gone downstairs.

The youth Peronett came out. Young as he was his cheek was flushed with wine.

"It's a rare go, isn't it?" he said to Marian.

"Sir!" was her faint reply.

"It's a rare go, this row between the governor and his lady? Never saw her, but hear she has neither blood, bone, nor beauty. I'd

bet five to one on Trufit. Never saw a more resolute fellow in my life—capital fellow! Why don't you advise your mistress?—but no, I beg your pardon—you are not a servant, I see—I am sure I beg your pardon—I am very sorry. Why don't you tell your aunt, or whatever she is, to be obedient, and all that—love, honour, and obey sort of thing?—It's her duty—her duty. Eh?"

"Oh!" exclaimed Marian, in agony, "he is really breaking the door—he really is! There will be harm, real harm done! Cannot we prevent it?"

Master Peronett looked at her for a moment, laughed, and said, "I believe you're in earnest." She did not, however, hear him, but flew upstairs.

Mr. Trufit had burst in the door, and stood, panting after the exertion, in the centre of the room, his cheeks scarlet, his eyes glittering, while crouched in a large chair was a heap of linen, and cambric, and lace, surmounted by the shrunken and terrified features of Mrs. Cavendish Trufit.

"Now, the keys, you old she-devil! Will you give me the keys?" said the once gay and obsequious husband.

"No!" she screamed—"No! no! no!" And it was a shrill and fearful scream, that might have proceeded from the throat of the Witch of Endor, so shrill, so sharp, so unearthly was its tone. "No! no! no!" she repeated; and then she beat her arms, and called him by all the opprobrious names she had ever read of as applied to tyrant husbands, and asked him if he meant to rob or murder her.

"Not I, faith! But I must have my keys," he answered, with the dogged resolution of a drunken, consequently unreasonable, man.

"*Your* keys?" repeated the lady—"your keys, indeed! I wonder what made them *your* keys, you beggar? Don't you know they are *my* keys, and it's *my* house you live in, and it's my bread you've been eating, and it's my money you've been spending, my wine you've been drinking"——

"Halt there, Cats!" he exclaimed; "it was Hollytop's wine—wine? by my soul, I believe

it was brandy! Never drink brandy but a as wind-up; a night of brandy is intemperate. That's the worst of brandy, it finishes a man so soon—so very soon, does brandy. Once more, the keys."

"They're in this bag," said the foolish woman, shaking the bag in his face; "but you shan't have them—you shan't have them!"

Trufit made what he called "a slap" at the bag, but the lady was too expert: she thrust it behind her, and placed her back firmly against it.

"Shan't to *me!* We'll try for it," he exclaimed.

Marian saw the expression of his distorted face, and never forgot it—it was frightful—awful, as a picture of human wickedness. All the bad passions of his really bad nature struggled in his countenance: his wife's taunts had stung him to the soul; he was sober enough to understand them—to feel their bitterness—the worst bitterness of all—their truth; but he had at first tried to conceal that he did feel them. He rushed to where she sat. Marian,

hardly knowing what she did, cast herself on his arm——

"Oh, do not—do not," she exclaimed, "do not—she is ill—she is angry—do not!"

He threw her off almost without an effort, and seizing his wife by the shoulder shook her violently.

"Give them up, I tell you, or I'll do you a mischief; give them up, you stubborn fool!"

The unfortunate woman screamed; by main force he raised her from the seat, and snatching the reticule which contained the keys, dashed her back again with a cruel curse, and stumbled his way downstairs. Mrs. Trufit continued screaming long after her heartless husband had evinced his triumph by throwing the contested keys in the air and catching them again, to the no small amusement of Master Peronett. The policeman paused under the windows; the servants, dressed and undressed, rushed into the room; there was a general hurrying to and fro. Marian continued kneeling by the side of Mrs. Trufit, using every means in her power to calm and subdue

her feelings;—her efforts were vain; Mrs. Trufit screamed and kicked unceasingly, until nature, fairly exhausted, gave way, and she swooned in Marian's arms.

"Bear her up, Judith," she said, "I cannot."

"My heavens!" exclaimed the servant, "he has stabbed her—there is blood upon her dress."

"It is mine," said Marian calmly, "don't you see it is mine?"

Judith did see that blood was gushing from her temple. Mr. Trufit, when the poor girl interposed her small strength to save his wife, had thrown her against the corner of the wardrobe, and it was a miracle that she was not killed. Nevertheless, she had uttered no complaint; she had not even thought of herself, so absorbed was her own suffering by the frightful scene she had witnessed.

"Master won't let me go for Doctor Darling," said Judith; "he says, Missus's faint 's all sham."

"Missus" had been laid on the bed, and continued in a state of perfect inanity, while

Mr. Trufit was carousing in the drawing-room beneath.

"You must go, nevertheless," said Marian, "I think she is dying."

"Master's got the keys, and I'm sure I daren't go near him again, he looks so savage —here's more burnt feathers and hot vinegar —she'll come to presently."

"I will, then," said Marian, resolutely; "she did not leave me to die, nor will I leave her."

She pressed her handkerchief to her temple, and descended with a firm step; she opened the door, and the usually trembling girl stood firm and unabashed before four more than half intoxicated men.

"Pray, Sir," she said, "let me have the key of the hall-door—I assure you Mrs. Trufit is dangerously ill; she has not spoken since."

"A miracle, a blessing!" shouted one, "Here's the health of a silent lady!"

"Here, Marian, drink this to the finding of her tongue," said the husband; "by the powers, I Jerryed it long enough, and should have done so longer, but for your excellent

advice, Robert — drink, Miss Prim—drink, little fool—drink, I say!"

"I will not, Sir," she replied, pushing away the hand palsied by intoxication, which spilt the glowing wine over the splendid carpet; "I entreat you to give me the key; indeed, Sir, she is very ill. Oh, when to-morrow comes you will lament this!"

"Holloa, little parson! Who is she, Trufit? any relation, eh?" inquired one bloated boon-companion of the master of the revels.

"Whoever she is, she must be treated with respect, gentlemen," said Trufit, with drunken gravity, "she is under my pro—protection. Go to bed, child; shan't have the key, though."

"I *must* have it," persisted Marian, indignantly; "indeed, Sir, your wife may die before morning."

"My wife, my curse! If you don't get out of the room I'll turn you out of the house! Take your hand from your head, and let me see if you go pale at that, young three-year old!"

The person nearest Mary, taking advantage of the command, seized the arm which held

the kerchief to her face, and as he hastily drew it down, the blood gushed freely from the wound in her temple.

"The girl herself is hurt," exclaimed young Peronett, starting up and seizing the key which Mr. Trufit had placed on the table at his side, "and halloa—steady—if I can—I'll go for the Doctor myself."

"Halloa, Trufit, that's too much of a good thing," exclaimed another of his boon-companions.

"'Pon my soul, gentlemen, as I'm an honest man," said the bewildered tippler, "'pon my soul, gentlemen—I am—I am—I mean no intention—of being in at the death—no—assault or—battery—no, she hurt herself—that's it—a clear case, gentlemen."

And, satisfied with his own words, he looked round with an expression of ludicrous sagacity; while Marian, having quite recovered her self-possession, seized the key from young Peronett, and despatched a servant for the still gentle and still fascinating Dr. Darling, upon whom Time had been shedding his blessings

and his warnings: for Dr. Darling now wore spectacles (occasionally)—indulged in an after-dinner nap (occasionally)—sent a friend to visit those patients who would submit so to be visited (occasionally) — dyed his hair (occasionally), which gave it a sort of pepper-and-salt aspect—and had altogether got the round, sound, rosy, contented, and wealthy appearance which a money-making doctor, at any end of the town, is likely to attain, when he arrives at the sleek and comfortable age of forty-five and upwards.

Your young practitioners always drive their horses; but Darling's horses looked as if their dignity would only admit of a walk, and were in as good condition as himself—and went as softly too, for the morning dawned before his footman thundered at Mr. Trufit's door.

The dissipated husband would have been recognised, by those who are fond of fitting-on characters, as the original of the Rake in the "Rake's Progress," had Hogarth been alive to paint the picture in our days. His servant had covered him up on the sofa, where he slept

the dull, heavy sleep of drunkenness. His companions had all left the house, with one exception—the youth Peronett remained: the scene had sobered him; his feelings had not yet grown old nor his heart callous. Seeing the state of Mr. Trufit, he hoped to be of use —he had bathed his head in cold water, and waited anxiously enough to hear the Doctor's opinion.

"She is very ill, my dear, very ill," said Dr. Darling to Marian, as he left the room; "and you, my dear—why, God bless me! you seem very ill too!"

And then the good-natured man looked at her temple, and explained (as doctors always do) that *if* she had fallen on the wardrobe half an inch one way, or half an inch the other way, she must have fractured the os frontis and died. Dr. Darling wished she should understand her good fortune.

"'Twas a pity I did not die, Sir," said Marian, calmly.

And then the good Doctor read her a lecture on unthankfulness to God, and want of

proper feeling; and said a great deal which would have softened and cheered a harder or an older heart than poor Marian's—for, ere he had finished, her face was bathed with tears.

Mrs. Trufit continued really ill. She had worked herself into a fever, and persisted in refusing to see her husband, who soon ascertained that he had gone too far. The poor woman raved incessantly of his perfidy and ingratitude—blaming his hardness rather than her own folly; and Marian was obliged to bear the brunt of their mutual ill-tempers—not only the brunt, but the odds and ends and corners of their humours fell to her share.

The humble companion is ever the one marked out, in upstart or heartless families, for insult or oppression. Day and night she watched by Mrs. Trufit's bedside: she seemed to be independent of rest and food; and yet the nurse was praised for Marian's thoughtfulness, and she was blamed for the nurse's stupidity.

Mr. Trufit, finding his wife, as he termed it,

"run to cover," after various ineffectual efforts at reconciliation, and sundry interviews, explanatory and unsatisfactory, with Dr. Darling (who healed as many mental as he did bodily wounds), resolved "to let her cool."

"You knew her before you married her, my dear Sir, and knew what you married her for; and if you do not find her exactly what you hoped, why, your hope has not been fulfilled—that's all you can say; and I assure you that, in my extensive practice, I find such to be very often the case."

The Doctor spoke truly. "Give and take" should be the matrimonial motto; or reverse it, if you will, "Take and give."

## CHAPTER III.

### A RESOLUTION TAKEN.

"It's no use, Nurse, speaking to you, *you* do not understand me; I have told you so before, and often."

"I do, darlint, I do. It's asy said 'I can't bear it;' it's asy said 'I don't care;' but, my dear child, think what it would be; no roof over yer head"——

"I could live in your little room," interrupted Marian; "sleep in your bed, work for you, you could sell my work; and in time, Nurse, in time, I might—I would—do something better. I can hear of nothing here. I have learnt a great deal since I left school—I have found out how little I know."

"And is it that that makes you so eager to tache?" inquired the Nurse, who, on the principle of "when the cat's away," had entered

the back parlour from the garden, to meet her favourite.

"Oh, you know not what I have gone through during the last six months! The horror of that dreadful night—then her continued illness, increased and prolonged by perpetual quarrelling—the ill-temper above, the riot and dissipation below; while I, the poor foot-ball, driven from one to the other, pay for my food and lodging by services that menials neither could nor would perform, and weep my heart out when I enjoy the only happiness I know—perfect solitude."

"Have patience; she can't hould out for ever, and she can't but remember ye when she dies."

"I cannot have patience on that account," said the high-souled girl; "nor do I wish for such remembrance. But, patience! Heaven defend me, Nurse! You talk of patience! Oh, I have paid dearly for the indulgences of my childhood! I suppose every life has its allotted quantity, mine were lavished on my youth. Dearly have I paid for my imper-

fect education—dearly do I pay for my daily bread! You cannot know it—cannot understand it. My heart will break!'

"God help you, my precious child!" exclaimed poor Katty, while tears of sympathy gushed from her eyes: "if I had a home fit for ye, it's at yer feet I'd lay day and night—night and day I would, and be satisfied with the world just to look at ye; and even now, if you war one like myself——"

"And am I not?—am I not, despite this silken frock, the creature of your care, Nurse—your own child, Nurse? Oh, if I had been brought up as *your* child, I should have been happy!"

"My heart ached for that same, mavourneen! But it would have been cruel unjust to you, for I have a feel that ye'r a born gentlewoman, and so ye'll turn out yet, by the blessing of God! *There's a silver side to every cloud that sails about the heavens, if we could only see it;* and what we don't see, why we're not good Christians if we don't trust—small thanks to us to trust the God that

gives us all. But tell me, darlint, who's her favourite now?"

"Her new maid is her present fancy. Oh, I would have given worlds to be able to love or esteem Mrs. Trufit—even the pity I feel for her is more than half contempt."

"Do you get any time at all at the piano now?"

"Oh, no, her humour is changed; my music, which at first was doated on, is now called noise."

"Well, but you keep on at the French? I could *parley vou* myself a bit with you, if we had time," observed Katty, rather conceitedly.

"I fear my French is incorrect," said Marian; "I was not taught properly."

"Sorra a bit; I never heard mortal turn 'Malbrook' better than you used, my precious! Do you ever take a step at the dance?"

"Nurse, you are very unfeeling," replied Marian, stamping her little foot, and bursting again into tears; "how could I dance? Mrs. Trufit has not been out of her room since that awful quarrel about the keys; and, when Mr.

Trufit comes home, it is but to brawl, abuse, and insult. Oh, Nurse, Nurse! dance, when I'm insulted! dance, amid such scenes, dance with such feelings!"

"He does not insult you, does he?" interrupted Katty, looking at her earnestly. "I never got a right sight of him in all my life, but, by the Almighty——"

"Hush! hush, dear Nurse!—That's *her* bell; and, by it's sound, I know she's in anger."

"Marian—Miss Marian—Miss Marian—you turn pale! Oh, my grief! is it come to that with you, my rose in June! that you should turn pale at the tinkle of a bit of metal?—Well, I'm going. If you can't bear it any longer—you can't, that's all. And sure, though I'm a'most starving, still——Och! Marian—Miss Marian, core of my heart! the starvation is the only thing I would not ax ye to share with me!"

In truth, Marian's heart *was* almost broken. She had taken a long and not unuseful lesson in self-command—such a lesson is always salutary—but the branch had been bent

almost to breaking. She suddenly resolved to mention to Doctor Darling her desire to leave Mrs. Trufit, and seek employment. She did so.

"Well, my dear—well, if you like—particularly—but it seems very foolish. What can you possibly lack here?"

"Peace, kindness, affection," murmured Marian.

"Oh! and you expect to meet with that if you go out into the world as a companion, a teacher, a governess? My dear young lady, you know nothing of the world, believe me—positively nothing."

"Indeed, Sir, I could teach—I could instruct in a family, or in a school, for instance."

"Such as Miss Womble's," said the Doctor, smiling; "have you forgotten what you suffered there?"

"All schools are not like her's, Sir. Here I am considered a burden—I feel I *am* a burden. Indeed, Sir, I am not the self-willed tiresome child you once knew. I would do any earthly thing to make myself independent."

"Listen to me, my dear young lady," said

the kind-hearted man. "I go much into the world, and I see the machinery, the hidden springs, of hundreds upon hundreds of families—few can effect concealment with their doctor; he is sure to find them out; people may carry themselves straight with the world, but the physician discovers the curve, my dear young lady, he discovers the curve. Now, I have seen you tried. I remember you a pretty, spoiled, petted infant, worshipped, idolized; I saw you, despite mismanagement, growing into an accomplished girl; I observed the change poor Mr. Jones's death made in your circumstances; I knew you at Miss Womble's —I noted your pallid cheek and wasted figure; but I observed the proud fire of your eye unquenched. It is gentler now."

"I am older, Sir."

"And wiser; you do not rebel as you used against those circumstances which are justly termed the dispensations of Providence. Had you been properly managed you would have been different from the first. Proper management would have directed, not broken, your spirit. Had a phrenologist ex-

amined your head, he would have prescribed a very different mode of education: however, it is not too late; you may do much."

"I have no time for reading or study of any kind, sir."

"My dear, the great business of life is not learned from books."

"What I have learned, except from books, has been sad indeed."

Doctor Darling looked at her for a moment, and then continued—

"I wish particularly to impress upon your mind, my dear girl, that you might go into eighteen families out of twenty, and not be better treated than you are in this. Listen: people expect their governesses to be gifted with the feelings and habits of gentlewomen, and yet that they should submit to be treated as slaves; that they should possess and exercise both talents and accomplishments of the highest order, and demand less wages than is paid to upper servants. I knew one. I will tell you her story; yet, I doubt, my dear young lady, if you will quite understand it when it is told," said the Doctor. "It is sad, very sad;

so sad, that, much as I am accustomed to sorrow, and blunted as my feelings must necessarily be, I never think of poor Adéle without wishing she were alive now, that I might take her to my own home, to be the friend of my wife, the instructress of my children."

"Had she no mother?" inquired Marian.

"She had a mother."

"Then, I suppose, somebody 'patronised' her," said Marian, with great *naïveté*, naturally anxious to account for the sadness of poor Adéle's life.

"No, my dear, nobody patronised her," answered the Doctor, who, having benefited largely in his practice by patronage, had no idea of attaching anything unpleasant or disreputable to its influence, and who, of course, knew nothing of the bitterness of house-patronage. "Nobody patronised her," sighed the Doctor: "if some one had, she might have been alive now, poor thing. There was nothing very remarkable in her case—nothing—and yet it was very sad. There are

certain things get hold of one's feelings, twist about one's heart, and one can't get rid of them—that's the truth. Adéle Vermont was the child of a French father and an English mother, and she was a beautiful combination of both countries — full of life and spirit, gaiety, goodness, and talent."

"I thought, Sir, you said she was unhappy; that her tale was a sad one," interrupted Marian.

"I speak of her as she was before she became a governess," said the Doctor; "her gaiety, and spirit, and life could not stand *that*, of course, at least situated as *she* was. The very situation in itself curbs down the spirits; and that, perhaps, is no harm, where they are so high; but Adéle was peculiarly unfortunate; and this, my dear Marian, is what I particularly wish to impress upon you, in her story—that her great abilities, her fascination, every advantage, everything called an advantage in other situations of life, are disadvantages to a governess—do not misunderstand me—there are exceptions to every rule—there are

many sensible and intelligent gentlewomen who perfectly understand the value of a well-educated governess—treat her kindly and affectionately, and reap that kindness sevenfold, in the attention their children receive, and the progress they make—they are exceptions to a rule—whereas governesses treated otherwise than well ought to be the exceptions. Unfortunately I cannot influence society in this respect: I can only lament the false position in which it places many others as well as governesses. Perhaps I was wrong in saying that fine abilities were a disadvantage to a teacher; fine feelings and fine tastes certainly are; because they experience no sympathy for the first, and have no opportunity of indulging the second. Beauty exposes them to insult; and the more fascinating the more they are regarded as objects of mistrust by their employers. Adéle's mother was a vain and weak woman; instead (as wise women always do) of trying to make the best, she made the worst of everything, and was perpetually regretting the loss of the com-

forts she had enjoyed in better days. She still had a small income, which, with economy, would have been considered, by many, enough for both; but she did not think so; and Adéle, sooner than see her beloved parent unhappy, resolved to provide her with more than comforts, and sought, and soon obtained, a situation in a nobleman's family, where her fine abilities enabled her to demand a large salary. Nothing of what is called drudgery was expected from her; she was installed as directress to two children, Ladies Jane and Julia, and overlooker of a tribe whom she found in a state of insubordination that it was very difficult to control. The first day's experience in that house was never forgotten. Lady Jane's nurse came to see her nursling; the woman was warmly attached to the child —the child to her—and the little creature leapt affectionately upon her neck, and kissed her warmly; the mother entered at the moment, and coldly commanded her to 'put Lady Jane down;' ordered the child immediately 'to go and wash her face;' adding that

she never suffered her children to be 'polluted' by the touch of 'low people.' What could Adéle do? She saw that all the fine and noble feelings she had intended to cultivate in these high-born children would die for want of nurture, or be trained into shapes of foul deformity; she felt there would be a struggle between principle and interest: the situation was a good one; the lady was pleased with her acquirements; she knew she had a treasure—a lady-like, well-bred gentlewoman, far less presuming than upstarts ever are, and she was disposed to relax her haughtiness, and treat her better than she had ever treated any one before: but she would dictate; would have the children not only taught, but feel after her own fashion; and her ways of thinking were so different from Adéle's, that the girl pondered what she ought to do. I called one morning to see her mother, and there was Adéle conversing with her parent about this difficulty. 'They treat me kindly,' she said; 'that is, kindly to what I am told other governesses are treated. His lordship has twice

spoken to me; and her ladyship, who talks to me for at least two hours a-day concerning the children, once hoped "I had not a headach," after being shut up in the school-room for six hours; but I could bear *that*, she added; 'bear anything, if I was only suffered to cultivate what I consider good and holy in the hearts of these poor children.'

"'I am sure,' said her mother, 'you have no reason to complain, if you bring up the children according to her ladyship's desire: that is all you have to do; and I know she is more than satisfied.' Now, Adéle's reply was very remarkable; her mother called it foolish, but I call it remarkable. 'I could be happy,' she said, 'if I believed those children were without *souls;* but, knowing that they have *souls,* and being engaged to watch over them, I cannot remain, unless I am permitted to direct their pride, and endeavour to make them what I *know* they ought to be.'"

"That was right," exclaimed Marian, delighted at the sentiment, and forgetting, in her pleasure, that she had heard the tale was a sad one.

"That was quite right and honourable——"

"And foolish," added Doctor Darling. "What could she want, in reasonableness, more than she had—a splendid salary—a hundred guineas a-year—and only required to do what she was desired."

"And her duty, Sir," added Marian, firmly.

"Surely it was her duty to do as her ladyship required?" said the Doctor.

"You must know, Sir, better than I can what is right; and it is the duty of all to do as their employers desire, so long as their consciences permit."

"So ho!" interrupted the Doctor. "Why, *you* have got conscientiousness, too, have you? Then you will never do for a fashionable governess, my dear girl, as society is constituted at present. When vain, ignorant mothers employ women of talent to educate their children, and yet will not suffer their talent to have play, conscientiousness is folly: if you indulge that freak, you will never get on,—no, no. The way to get on as governess in a fashionable family is to flatter the lady—knit purses for

the gentlemen—overlook the inattention of the masters—pet the children—and never risk a contradictory opinion."

"You are not serious, Sir?" said Marian, looking very grave.

"I *ought* to be serious, then," he replied, "for it is a serious matter—a very serious one—involving the character of a future generation. But Adéle was so impressed with the belief that if she was not permitted to train those children up in high and honourable principles she had better not train them at all—that she told her ladyship so, and left."

Marian had sufficient worldly sense not to repeat that she still thought Adéle acted justly, as such an opinion was in opposition to that of her friend the Doctor; but she looked as if she thought so, and triumphed in the uprightness of Adéle's mind.

"Well, Sir?" were, however, the only words she uttered.

"Well?" he repeated; "but, indeed, my dear, it was anything but well; it was very ill—the noble lady was 'insulted,' as she expressed

it—'more grossly than ever she had been before—and that by a *servant*.'"

"Servant?" repeated Marian.

"Yes; you do not fancy that these fine lords and ladies look upon their governesses as anything but servants, that is, in general? No, my dear young lady, you are wrong altogether; and I pray you, let me go on, for I shall never be done at this rate.

"Insulted she had been, she said, by a servant, and nothing should ever induce her to recommend her again; she might *starve*, the proud baggage! Her ladyship confessed she had abundant knowledge — abundant talent—an admirable method of teaching—excellent temper—her pronunciation good—her manners ladylike—but she had presumed to have an opinion of her own—an opinion in contradiction to hers. That was enough—she would never recommend her. I had warned Adéle of this; and the foolish girl—foolish despite her acquirements—had the absurdity to argue with me, and affirm that her ladyship could never be so unjust as to act

in that manner. Whenever she applied for any situation, she was, of course, asked where she had been: Adéle always spoke the truth—the name she mentioned was as a spell amongst either fashionables, or would-be fashionables. But if she permitted persons to call, she was certain to hear no more from them; and nothing that a governess could say would be believed against the word of a lady of rank. Now, it is a habit amongst the set her ladyship belonged to, to abuse each other; but they never suffer *any inferior person to abuse them*—that is quite another thing. No one believed Adéle's story: her mother grew poorer, and more poor; and at last her truly-accomplished daughter was obliged to take refuge, as it were, in a family of what might be called *half castes*—people, who, not being satisfied with the station to which God has called them, are perpetually climbing the ladder, from which they are ejected by the heels of such would-be aristocrats as have got a few steps in advance. Such people are, above all others, harsh and insolent to their

inferiors. Now, don't interrupt me. Inferiors they will ever be considered; and if Adéle's conscience was wounded before, her pride—her womanly pride—was tortured now."

"But she bore that," said Marian, with strong emphasis—"she bore *that*, Sir?"

"How do you know?" inquired the Doctor.

"I *feel* it," was Marian's reply. "She had a *right* to conquer that, Sir—the other was a principle—that is what I *feel*, Sir," she added.

Doctor Darling muttered, "She will never do for a governess! Well, there she stayed, stealing out in the damp dews of evening, to see her fretful mother, who was hastening to her grave, while the poor daughter, who had nothing else to love, felt every hour, still more and more, how hard it would be to part with her. Sometimes she would entreat permission to sit up with her mother at night; and, after so doing, would tramp from the old-fashioned neighbourhood of Chelsea to Grosvenor Place, so as to attend, before eight, to the intellectual and bodily cravings of seven weakly children. Faint and weary, after her long night's watch-

ing, Adéle was but little able to work through her labours; but she did so, acting the part of many professors, and bearing the drudgery of all, for a sum which *one* professor would have scorned.

"I remember, one night, being seated by her mother's bedside, finding that the pulse was failing, visit after visit, until at last it resembled the faintest vibration of life, when poor Adéle entered—and as she did I thought it impossible, knowing even as I do the ravages which care can work, that anything could be so changed. She kissed her mother's damp brow, and looked to me for hope. I had none to give; and volunteered to tell her employers that her mother was so ill that she could not return in the morning; and what was the reply—a note, saying that as she preferred 'loitering' at her mother's to attending her duty, she might remain away altogether—it was not respectable—and Mrs. S. wished everything in her house to be respectable; but it was not respectable to have a young woman going out, they knew not where, at night.

"After this she had to send for the small sum due several times. Her mother lingered on until every article of her once-excellent wardrobe was disposed of, to find what she required. Oh, the patient, gentle, loving nature of that girl! She used to draw, and dispose of her drawings—to give music-lessons, for eighteen-pence each to the children of the butcher and the grocer—and teach Italian or French for two shillings an hour—watching the time to hasten home, through wind and rain, at all hours, and hardly daring to unfasten the door, lest she should see the senseless features of a corse! At last the mother died, and then the poor friendless governess sat her down by the side of what had been her mother, lifted up her voice, and wept. Now, if she had not gainsaid her ladyship, this trouble would not have come upon her; for, with all her pride, Lady R. had a generous heart. Do you perceive?"

Marian shook her head.

"You are obstinate," said the Doctor; "you will *not* see."

"I see, Sir," persisted Marian. "*She tried*

*to do her duty*, and she suffered for it—but she did not die?—one so high-minded did not, I hope, die herself in misery?"

"Marian, scores and scores of high-minded people die monthly—in prisons—by the way-side—in poorhouses—in the crowded streets—do they die in misery?—Some are spoken of afterwards; and then, perchance, those who had refused the smallest aid, wish they had known how bad it really was:—others leave nothing to mark their departure into the womb of the earth, except *an hour's dump on the sexton's spade.*"

Marian turned away to weep.

"She died, poor thing, three weeks after her mother; and a few days before her departure a letter came from an uncle in India, enclosing money, and bills for money. 'They are too late, Doctor,' she said; 'but they will repay those who have been kind to me. Only put a stone over our grave.' You may see it any day," continued the Doctor; "and I will show you the lines engraved thereon:"—

A MOTHER AND DAUGHTER
REST FROM TOIL, WANT, AND SORROW
BENEATH THIS STONE.

"No woman," he added, "who can weave nets, spin flax, or sew a seam, should ever, with my consent, go out as a governess, unless" —being ever too polite to be positive—"unless under very particular circumstances."

"But, Sir, I should earn my wages—it would be my own— in one word, I should feel *independent*. Oh, Sir! cannot you, who have known me so long, help me to get rid of the misery which indeed—indeed will weigh me to the grave. As long as I felt useful—but I need not trouble you, you have seen, known all; if I am too ignorant, or too young for a governess, I can be a servant, or perhaps if——"

Doctor Darling prevented our heroine from continuing in this strain; he assured her he would think, look out, inquire.

In short, he never quitted any one, if he could help it, with an aching heart, and this was one great cause of his popularity. Marian felt as if a new hope had dawned upon her.

It was short-lived, however. Mr. Trufit returned in the evening, bringing with him two

or three friends; amongst them young Peronett, who was nearly of Marian's age; the youth had fallen, as youths will sometimes do, deeply in love with the very beautiful girl, so friendless, so harshly treated; and, while loitering from room to room, he inquired of Mrs. Cavendish Trufit's new favourite servant where she was.

The maid, after sending Marian down stairs, told Mrs. Trufit of the inquiry, adding the information, that she was now speaking to the young gentleman in the "*back parlour.*"

Marian, quite unprepared for the interview, asked Master Peronett, "What he wanted with her?" While he, with the boy-bashfulness of his age, said "He wanted to know how she was? that was all!" Adding "he had stolen away on purpose to inquire."

Marian thanked him for his kindness, and was wishing him "Good evening," when the door opened and in walked Mrs. Cavendish Trufit, the first time she had been down stairs for nearly seven months. Without making the least inquiry as to the cause, forgetting alto-

gether the upright and almost haughty purity of the foundling's character, she loaded her with the most opprobrious epithets, called her by names too gross to repeat, and upbraided her as useless and worthless. In the midst of the *fracas* Mr. Trufit burst in to inquire the reason of "the row," and merely from a desire to annoy his wife took Marian's part; upon which Mrs. Trufit waxed more wrathful, said even more wicked things than foolish women in a passion generally do, cursed the hour that Marian was found; said she had caused dissensions between her and *both* her husbands, heaped insult upon insult on her unoffending head, as usual, with an *ad libitum* fit of hysterics, and was carried back to her room half kicking, half fainting, by the footman—Mr. Trufit declaring, all the time, the woman was mad, and finally locking her and her new favourite maid up together in her own room.

"It is but right to assure you," said Master Peronett to Mr. Trufit, "that the young lady did not know, had no idea that I was coming here."

"And if she had, no great harm; both too young to think of being broke in yet—hope *you* will never do anything of the sort, Peronett, you'll have no cause—women can't help it, nothing to drive away ennui but matrimonial squalls; can't hunt, nor race, nor bet, poor devils! My old 'un is squally enough, and so cursed unreasonable; however, her marriage deed of gift prevents me from being very uneasy. Come, boy, come, Peronette, fill your glass! Why you'll never have the heart to spend the money your old governor is hoarding up for you, if you don't pluck up a heart!"

"I assure you, Sir," persisted the youth, too anxious to care for the inducement Trufit offered, "the young lady was not to blame, she did not deserve the harshness Mrs. Trufit bestowed on her—indeed she did not!"

"Why to be sure she did not," replied Mr. Trufit, "who ever supposed she did? The wench is a good wench, and one of mettle: she will not mind it, she's used to it, as the cook said when she skinned the eels."

It was a cold sharp December night; a dense damp fog clung closely to the trees and houses,

shrouding every object in its thin mistiness; the lamps cast a lurid light around them, and those obliged to be abroad even at ten o'clock blew their fingers, and gathered their cloaks more closely round their shoulders.

The breath of men and animals hung heavily in the air, and there was no talking in the streets; but for the occasional call of one coachman to another to make way, a call which generally expanded into a curse, accompanied by a cracking of the whip before room was made, one might have fancied the enchantment of perpetual silence over the city—all was so still and death-like.

Katty Macane lived in one of those narrow streets diverging across Chelsea Common: a low, damp room, in a small, ill-contrived house, was all she could call her own. It is, in this every-day world, and more particularly in London, where servants are looked upon in the light of necessary evils rather than anythings else, difficult to believe in or imagine the deep fidelity, the earnest devotion, of Katty Macane to her beloved nursling. Over and over again

she could have been comfortably and respectably placed as cook, for her talents and knowledge in the culinary art were appreciated by many of what she termed "first-rate genteels;" but she preferred remaining in what might be termed positive poverty, because it gave her an opportunity of watching, however distantly, over her "darlint," and of rendering her many useful services which Marian had not the means of paying for. In Ireland, in the olden time, every family had its Katty Macane, to the full as devoted as the present one; and even now there is no lack of them in "warm-hearted Erin." In many of the country parts of Ireland servants continue faithful in heart and soul to what they call the "ould residenters," and serve them with zeal and fidelity, though they are ill-fed, ill-clad, and badly recompensed.

Katty inhabited her miserable room with an untiring and cheerful spirit. She "got a day's cooking and a trifle of clear-starching now and agin; and then a look at Miss Marian—and sure that kept her heart up!" On the parti-

cular night, the darkness and discomfort of which has been described, Katty was sitting over the ashes of her little fire. The room was, perhaps, twelve feet by ten; the walls were papered, but the paper had been either worn or rubbed off in various places; and Katty (who boasted some taste) had done her best to repair the deficiencies by either blue or green pieces: she said they both looked the same by candle-light. On the shelf, acting the respectable as chimney-piece, were a few bright tins, and, flanking the centre, stood a pair of tall brass candlesticks, with snuffers and tray between. Above them hung a portrait of the Duke of Wellington—*the* Duke—in a respectable gilt frame. Immediately beneath it were crossed an old pistol and a bayonet, both clean and bright, as if ready for active service: these were mementos of her departed husband. Above the Duke's picture, placed so as to shadow the left portion of the frame, was a gauntlet, or stiff leather glove, and the long drooping plume of a cavalry officer. In one corner stood the nurse's turn-up bed: it had

just been turned down, and the quilt had the appearance of being manufactured out of blue and scarlet cloth—the middle being scarlet, with a blue border along the sides and ends, with corner-pieces to match On the table was placed a large white bowl, filled with starched muslins. A small cupboard opened at either side the fire-place. Beneath the window was a long narrow form, sufficiently long to hold two small washing tubs; they were turned bottom upwards. There was a chest of drawers opposite the fire-place; on its top rested a scarlet tea-tray, in the centre of which was depicted a green cannon, surrounded with purple smoke, and here and there a soldier's cap or musket or heels, mingled with a horse's head and long flaunting tail; each varying in colour, and forming a *tout ensemble* which Cooper's pencil never could have achieved. Round this nondescript design ran a white scroll, upon which was written, in letters of gold, "Wellington and Victory"*—exhibiting the taste and orthography of the artist. There were two chairs

* Fact.

in the room, and a low circular straw seat which in Ireland is called a "boss," and which Katty must have prevailed upon some son of the Emerald Isle to manufacture for her especial use. Upon this "boss" sat a most disreputable-looking cat; indeed, nothing short of Katty's extreme benevolence could entertain such an animal. He had a very disagreeable obliquity of vision, caused by his having lost the sight of an eye in one of those midnight brawls which certainly make a sufficient quantity of noise in the world; his coat was coarse and upstanding, resembling in texture those outer garments which, of late, have made our fashionable young men seem exceedingly like bears; but puss had the advantage in colour—his coat was black, and what is called "tan" in a dog, "carroty" in a cat; his ears were jagged and torn, and his right paw had a turn out which made it appear as if the bone had been broken; one side of his face was singed, and his upper lip split to the nose. "Blucher" deserves especial notice, because, next to Marian, he was Katty's favourite. The creature

was fat and muscular—looked as if no dog, however large, dared attack him with impunity—and was invariably declared by Katty herself to be "the very moral of ould Blucher, the blagguard." The cupboard contained various articles of crockery—two or three books—some scraps of bread; a fragment of cold pickled pork on a cracked dish, and some as cold potatoes; a bottle for holy water—another—not for *holy* water—but which, to do poor Katty justice for that difficult virtue, self-denial, she had brought herself to use very sparingly, and on that evening it was full of emptiness. The shelves were littered rather than filled; on the ground was a camp-kettle, and various remnants of what had been a well-stocked canteen. Two flat-irons were stuck between the bars of the grate; and, though there was an absence of what English room-keepers understand and designate so well under the name of "comfort," still everything was scrupulously clean and in its place; and there was a species of eccentricity in the decorations and inhabitants of the little chamber

which rendered its appearance worth remembering. In a corner stood Katty's chest—her especial treasure; a large, high, square box, carefully covered with a faded flag—the "triumph" of one of her husband's battles.

Blucher was fidgeting on his seat, not purring—he was a cat of too much consequence to be easily pleased—but sticking his long horny claws in and out of the "boss"—casting one eye occasionally at his mistress, who, having pulled an iron from the fire, was holding it to her cheek to ascertain its heat

"Och, bother!" she exclaimed. "See there, now, if I haven't burnt the skin off my thumb with ye, for a baste of an iron!—the weary's on me for not making an iron-houlder, and I thinking of it these six months. Lie down, Blucher—ye thief, do!—and don't be making crows' nests out of my boss; that's the thanks I get for rescuing you from the boys in the Five Fields, whin it was like an uninhabited island, and it now setting up for the pick of the quality. Well, there's no good of my thinking of ironing these fine things to-night;

they'll take an hour to dry ; I'll never heed the ironing till the morning, but get 'em damped down early, and my *colleen das* shall have her pelerines and frills before twelve."

In conformity with this resolution, Katty laid by her irons in the cupboard, took out a couple of potatoes, which she put to heat on the embers of her miserable fire, and filled a mug with a liquid which looked very like milk and water. These preparations were closely observed by the cat; though when Katty re-seated herself he had a very dissatisfied aspect and air.

"I see ye well enough, cat O!" she said, while diving her right hand into her capacious pocket; "I see ye well enough, but if it's fresh mate, or mate of any kind ye want, ye must just go and catch it yerself; there's lots of mice, and rats too, to be had for the trouble of watching in Chelsea Common—the pork is it ye'r twisting yer lip at? Many thanks to ye, my brave pusheen!—why, thin, *that* must do us for dinner three or four days yet, maybe—for sorra a bit of silver in my *right hand pocket*—

You know, Blucher, I always keep the *running gale* in my right hand pocket, and the reserved guard in my left—let's see what there's there, cat, O!"

And the military nurse dived into her *corps de reserve* immediately. She withdrew her hand, after much rummaging, with a disappointed expression of countenance, and turned over and over again within its palm all she possessed in the world of the useful metals of silver or gold—two undersized sixpences and one new shilling.

"One of you must go for tapes, and bobbin, and darning-cotton, at Mrs. Flynn's—for *her* things must go home dacent; she wears a sight of holes in her stockings, a trotting up and down after that ould Lady's vagaries; I didn't care if it was wholesome exercise. And then, Mrs. Katty Macane, you have eighteenpence to go on with—well, you owe nobody nothing, except twopence half-penny to Mr. Cooper for tobacco, and murdering bad stuff it was: Miss Marian would go mad, if she thought I ever took a 'shock of the pipe;' I'd

lave it off if I had any other comfort. Well, but, ould Katty, the worst of it is nobody owes you anything. And my two or three good families are out of town—well, never heed that; they'll soon be back, and it's only a little starvation, pusheen gra! Augh! ye turn up yer lip at that—ye'r a mighty uneasy cat, never content except when ye'r stuft out like the people after an Election;—what fine times we'd have, puss, if we could get fat on the same materials. Ah! sure, it's only the ups and downs, cat O! And ye'r too closely tied with what's called civilized society, my ould residenter, not to have yer share of it. Ye understand, my fine mouser, it's only up the gutter and down the gutter, that's all."

And Katty having concluded a sort of conversation, if so it could be called, where the talking was all on one side, fell into a reverie, turning her small property over and over in her hand, and looking from the Duke's picture to her browning potatoes, and from her browning potatoes to the Duke's picture.

"If I could only be asy in my mind about

HER," she muttered to herself, "what odds would it be whether the worms made sport o' me, or I made sport of myself. A horse has its skin, and a goose its feathers, but sorra a good in man or woman to their kind, whin onct the breath is out of their body. Sure that ought to make us do some good while it's in it. God help us!"

And again Katty mused, until roused by a knocking at the street-door.

"I wonder who that can be at this hour," said she, addressing the cat, who had been looking at the burning embers with a sleepy gravity, but moved its ears at the noise;—"Push, do you know? for it's my belief you know a dale more than you let on to."

There was no stir in the house, as if the demand for admittance was likely to be attended to; again it was repeated.

"Who can it be, Blu? the lone man in the next room hasn't so much as one of your specie' belonging to him! The landlady's in the back room below with her husband, the mangle, and the grawls; and Madam Bond,

under us, Push, has no one caring for her but her two boys at sea, she's opening the window for all that."

And then came the voice of a policeman, —"A young 'ooman wants Mrs. Macane."

In an instant Katty opened her window, and looked down upon two figures shrouded in fog, which poured rapidly in so as to extinguish the thin wretched candle that had nearly run its race in a green bottle on the little table; Katty kept her *rale* candlesticks for show.

"Who wants Mrs. Macane?"

"I do," replied a female voice, feebly, "I do; don't you know me—I—Marian."

"Hush!" shouted the nurse, "I'm coming."

She rushed down the stairs. "Holy Mother, is it come to this; and she'd have blared out her name if I hadn't stopt her!"

Quickly did she unlock the door, and as quickly lead the foundling upstairs—for it is needless to say that poor Marian Winter was Katty's untimely visitor.

"My child, my precious, my darlint—what's

the reason, what's the maning, what's the sense of this?" she exclaimed, while her nursling, unable to reply, had sunk upon the bed, her long black hair falling *en masse* upon her shoulders, saturated with the cold night mist. Her eyes looked of unnatural size—her hands and arms were as of marble—cold and rigid—her lips purple; and though her features seemed distorted with emotion, still there was no tear upon her cheeks, no moisture in her eyes: her beautiful head sank upon her bosom—her nurse chafed her hands; dried and bound up her tangled hair; heaped her remnant of wood and coal on the expiring fire, and at last had the satisfaction to feel her hands warm, and see her raise her head. Still she did not speak, but, now, gradually, tears coursed each other down her cheeks—and at last, throwing herself on her nurse's bosom, she wept long and abundantly.

"Do, it 'ill ase yer heart, a vourneen, it will; a blessed thing, entirely, is tears, sent by the Almighty for relief, when all other things fail—the tears o' pity, the tears o' sor-

row, the tears o' love, the tears o' repintance, the tears o' joy—are all the best o' phisick for a sick heart, my own Chora! Cry, my blessed child—cry, but do not moan that a-way; let the tears flow, but keep down the groans; groans should never come but from sin, and *you* are as sinless as when you lay a babe upon my breast; when I gave you all the love which I would have given to my own—if—but sure ye are *my own*, Miss Marian; my own, out and out, and sure it's proud and happy I'd be to see ye in the bottom of the pit of misery, and poverty, and distress, if I had only the means of pulling you out, and placing you upon a throne; wouldn't Katty Macane be the proud woman then?"

Marian pressed more closely to her nurse, who, anxious as she was to ascertain the cause of her appearance, restrained her curiosity, and uttered from time to time those words of tender endearment which she had applied to her in the days of early infancy. By degrees Marian's sobs became less frequent—tears dried upon her cheeks; her eyelids closed

upon her weary eyes; and though her now rosy lips still trembled, yet nature was so completely overpowered by her previous terrible emotions, that she fell asleep in her nurse's arms as if she had not numbered six months in a world from whose cruelty and caprice she had suffered so much. Tenderly, indeed, did that fond-hearted woman place the sleeping girl upon her humble bed; then covered her carefully with her cloak, her shawl, all that she could muster in her room calculated to preserve the warmth she had been at such pains to restore. She then retrimmed her little fire, placing the coal bit by bit within the grate; then, as silently unlocking a drawer, she drew out what she called "a decker of beads," a handsome rosary, and kneeling by the bed-side, repeated a prayer on each bead; and then, as if the prescribed mode of worship was too cold, too unsatisfactory, she let it fall upon her arm, and crouching beside the bed, burying her face in her hands, her feelings gushed out into earnest prayer, in which the superstition of her country and her religion

was mingled with true and heart-felt piety. Her petition was chiefly murmured, but sometimes words would break forth.

"Oh, holy Mary! though she has not bowed her knee to you, yet look down upon her, for the sake of your dear Son, in whom she trusts. Oh, Mother! Rose of Grace! think of the poor motherless girl sleeping in innocence and sorrow under your eyes. Oh, Queen of heaven, look from your glory on the poor girl who has no home. Blessed Saints! put knowledge in my heart; you who increased the widow's oil, increase my store. Oh, holy St. Bridget, I got most powerful good out of you once! I will return thanks for thy mercy, in the bitterest penance Father Doyle can put on me, if thou wilt only hear my supplication; and you know, holy Saint! I never broke word with you yet, often as you have befriended me, most blessed Saint Bridget. As to that woman without heart, oh, holy Saints! I'll not spile my soul with meddling with her, but lave her to the Devil quiet and asy, without any interference —and that's enough about her: why would I

be afther bothering yer holiness about sich varmint, and you with so much to trouble you —but look down upon that innocent face, the very *moral* of yer own angels—and watch over and shield her, oh, holy Spirits! who fill even this little room with watchfulness, and all goodness—take her under your protection; keep the badness of the world far from her; keep a *heart o' christal* in her bosom. And, oh, my grief! lay her in a green and early grave, rather than stain her with——" And then her voice sank into low and inarticulate sounds; and at a loss for fresh words to express her feelings, she again told over her rosary.

## CHAPTER IV.

### PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

How sluggish and heavy are the winter mornings, as they break in London—like the slumbers of a dull man overpowered with wine! The frosty rime clings to the household walls and trellises—the humblest window, with its light tracery; the tattered nets of the summer-spiders, unremoved till now, are thickened into cordage, yet shiver in the cold, sharp breeze, which pierces every street, alley, and crevice, and sends the blue-coated policeman thankfully, shuddering, to his home when his dreary watch is finished. The room-keeper slowly uncloses her shutters, and, muffling herself in her oldest shawl, prepares to light her fire. One by one the doors of the small houses open, and tradesmen, labourers, and errand-boys set out to earn their daily bread—their

daily bread!—the bread of scores of hungry dependents. That boy, so pale and thin, round whose neck his paler and thinner mother has twisted the remnants of a red "comforter," supports, with the scant nutriment seven weekly shillings can supply, that dying parent —the only creature who ever loved him or whom he ever loved; *they starve* together—a luxury which our modern Lycurguses deem it not right their subjects should enjoy in the new slave-state of Old England. Our poor now, the greater number of whom have contributed to the support of the state, starve in solitude!

The milkwoman, earliest of her class, clanks through the streets, and wakens many a sleeping yet hungry child, in the thin paper-houses of poverty, with her shrill cry. The brisk and bustling wife of the small but comfortable tradesman sends forth "her girl" to "take" the pale and delicate fluid, which certainly will not prove *too heavy* for her youngest born. Low as the houses are you cannot see the chimney-tops through the dense atmosphere, until, as the morning advances, the crispness

of the narrow streets melts into slime; the fog disperses; the sun shows like a ball of fire through the mist; children stump or splash their way to school—it is too cold to loiter; and the regular bustle and business—the cries of "Potatoes!" "Fine cabbages!" "Sprats!" "Periwinkles—wink—wink—wink!" "Cats-meat!" "Tins or kettles to mend!" "Old clo'!" —the occasional braying of an ill-used donkey —the yelp of an ill-born cur—all the strictly conventional noises of narrow streets in the suburbs of London have their birth and temporary existence. The "grocer and general dealer" displays his literally "dried fruits," mingled with candles, sugar, soap, tea, toys, matches, wine, lollipops, and deals forth his "pennorth of cheese" and farthing candle, in clean bib and linen sleeves, gaining twenty or twenty-five per cent. from the seldom more than sixpenny wants of his neighbour-customers. The "green-grocer" sells coal (so called) and wood; you may know his house from the top of the street. In addition to the form, on which small bunches of carrots and

turnips are piled, there is always a hand-truck at the door, with a half-bushel measure or empty black sack resting thereon; and by it, in fine weather, a nondescript dog, half-terrier, half-bull, the nuisance and terror of the vicinity. Perhaps "Mangling done here" may appear on a soiled piece of paper, wafered against the centre pane of the small window; while beneath pines a sickly geranium, over which a once white muslin curtain has been drawn, so as to give the only blessing its mistress has to bestow on its fading leaves—the light of heaven. If the street be long you will find a broker's shop; it may be small, or, in proportion to the neighbourhood, large, but there it is. Brokers are a thriving race; Aladdin's lamp seems to pass into their possession. At first, two wooden chairs, a deal table, an iron ladle, and, mayhap, a few imperfect plates and dusty glasses stand outside his door. These disappear, yet multiply; and after a time there comes a wide shop-front; and the man wears his Sunday coat on week-days; while his wife (brokers always have wives)

gets a "well-to-do" look, and is considered rather proud by Mrs. Slush, who keeps the gin-palace at the corner: opposite to which corner, if the street be *very* long and in a populous neighbourhood, it is ten to one but three golden balls point out to poverty a quick and convenient road to ruin.

The street in which Katty lived was long, very long, for such a neighbourhood. There were no shutters to her window; so, as the daylight advanced, and Marian still slept, she fastened her quilted petticoat across it, securing it at one end with a one-pronged fork, at the other, with her scissors. "How heavy her heart must be!" thought Katty. "Mine is bursting within me to know the rights of it; and yet she's likely to sleep these two hours—so she is." Then Katty crept to her cupboard; but, to her great dismay, she found that the cat had stolen her treasured pork—made a hearty supper—and left what certainly was not fit to use. Blucher knew he had done wrong, and anticipated punishment; but the sleeping girl was his best friend: for worlds

Katty would not have disturbed her; so she contented herself by pointing her finger at him, and muttering—"You hathen baste! to take advantage of me whin I was at me prayers! I'll sarve ye out—I will, ye Turk!"

At last the foundling started from her sleep, which had been too long, too heavy, too death-like to be refreshing; and then she detailed her recent treatment, and her resolution never again to enter Mrs. Cavendish Trufit's house.

Nurse Macane shook her head, and a thousand plans flitted through it while she dressed her charge and prepared breakfast.

Katty, like the generality of her countrywomen, possessed a great deal of imagination, mingled with national shrewdness: there was no lack of invention, but there was a great lack of the means of carrying that invention into action; besides, her indignation against Mrs. Trufit was boiling over.

She was too delicate to ask Marian if she had formed any plan, or if Doctor Darling had given her any prospect of employment. And

Marian sat silently opposite the only friend she had in the world: at last she said,

"Nurse, is there any way of finding out that kind lady Isabel Gascoigne? I think I told you how kindly she once spoke to me—she might procure for me employment."

"Lord love ye a lannan! sure I've hunted half London for her—she's abroad in France, or Italy, or somewhere; there ought to be a law made to keep good people in their own country; it's ould Ireland would profit by that, though indeed some of the grandest belonging to it wouldbe small loss. I heard no later than yesterday from a boy I know, who tould me that ould lady Bab, who you have often heard me tell of at your christening, (that certainly *was* a christening,) was coming to London from furrin parts about printing some new book; she was a great hand at thim humbuggin' books always; I read one of them myself whin I was mindin' you, all about history—a roomance it was called. Well, she's not been in town these five years, as I heard tell, by one that knows; a responsible, respectable boy he is.

"'She's a great woman in small places,' says he, 'and she likes that best; she's the head there, and she'd be only the tail here.'

"'And will any one be bothered with her nonsical books at this time o'day?' says I.

"'Ay,' says he, 'and jump,' says he. 'Sure the big booksellers would give their eyes to have a mylady stuck at the beginning of a book, it makes such a beautiful *blowcard* — cuts a splash; poor ignorant craythurs, to think that a mylady and my lord must write well; though it's not always by the laws of primogeniture they'd do it!'

"'They don't, then,' says I, 'for I've seen a lord's writing that couldn't be read.' He fetched a laugh at that, and I tould him thin, that as the booksellers liked grandee writin', I wondered they didn't get THE DUKE himself to make a book—then indeed they'd have something worth readin'; and he laughed agin at that, and said it would be a hit.

"Miss Marian, jewel, you've had a fine deal of larning, couldn't you make a book? Sure, the history of yer own life."

"I've no history to tell yet," said Marian, smiling at her nurse's opinion of her abilities; "and even if I had, I have no name to set it off."

"If you could, Johnny Donovan, the boy who tould me about Lady Bab, would tell me how you might make by it; he's porter to that big bookseller in——I forget the name of the street; he will tell me when Lady Bab and her dirty paper come to town, and thin I'll fish out news of Lady Isabel—I know she will be true to her word."

"She gave no promise to serve me, Nurse."

"She did the same thing, my jewel: she said, 'I was to find her if ever you war in trouble of any sort—or if Mrs. Jones changed.' Sure that's the same thing isn't it? Where's the use of fishing in sorrow if *we don't* fish some good out of it? One don't want to hear when such as you is in trouble, but only just to get ye out of it."

"Nurse," said Marian, raising her eyes to heaven, "I could be happy to die this moment

but that I know she will assert of me what is not true. Oh! if you could but have heard her cruel words!"

"It's well for her I didn't," said Katty, tucking up her sleeves still more highly with anything but a peaceable movement, "and it may be ill for her yet, that's all!"

"Hush! hush! Nurse, leave her to the Almighty, leave her to God!"

"Lave her to the devil!" (Do take that cup of tay while there's any good in it.) "Lave her to him who has the best right to her, that's all! Well, mavourneen, I'll keep quiet—I will; bad luck to the cat, he ate my bit of pork that would have cut into such a beautiful rasher for your breakfast, the baste—the heathen mountybank, he did! "Can you tell me who the young gentleman was who caused this ruction?" inquired the nurse, after Marian had told her all that had occurred.

"His name, Nurse, is Peronett—Master Peronett, I have always heard him called: the first night I ever saw him was when that piece

of work occurred about the keys. *I did* not like him then, it was so very horrid to see a lad, not older than I am, half tipsy."

"How do you know he was not older than you?" inquired the nurse, with admirable tact; but there was nothing to conceal, and Marian answered at once "He told me so."

"Did you compare ages, my darlint?"

"*Not compare* them, Nurse, exactly, but I know, or rather I don't know how it was; he is a mere boy, and so he asked me one day how old I was, and I told him what you have always told me."

"Well, dear——"

"That was all; he said he was nearly the same age."

"What a horrid thing to get tossicated at such an age!"

"It was Mr. Trufit's fault," said Marian, rather warmly; "he took him in, in some way; I know it was Mr. Trufit's fault; such a boy would never *choose* to be in such a state."

"He must be a bad boy," persisted Katty.

"No, Nurse, he is not," replied Marian frankly, "indeed he is not! I have seen very little of him, hardly exchanged two words at a time with him, but, save yourself, he *looked* the only being who had the least sympathy with me, during the last few weary, cruel months."

"Sym-pa-thee," muttered Katty, dividing the syllables between her teeth. "Hem!" said she aloud, and then she pulled the scissors out of the quilted petticoat, and wished bad luck to the single-pronged fork for sticking in so hard; and thus having admitted a sufficient quantity of light to answer the purpose of her investigation, she turned short round to her beloved charge, and said,——

"Well, and this Master Peronett, he has a good name any way. What war you saying about him, darlint?"

"Nothing more," replied Marian, composedly—"nothing more, he saw me insulted, and he denied the accusation honestly."

"Why, thin, God bless him for that same!"

exclaimed Katty Macane, fervently. All her prudential ideas vanished at the joyful tidings that there was one to do her darling justice; "God bless him, and mark him to grace, any way!"

There came no colour to Marian's cheek.

"Och, my grief, what would I do, entirely, if she had fallen in love?" murmured the Nurse. "You don't take your tay, my precious young lady; it's not what ye'r used to; I'm afeard it's only five shilling mixed; may be it's green you'd like?"

"It's very good indeed, Nurse, thank you, and I am happier than I have been for a long time; I feel as if my troubles in this world would be soon over. Oh, Nurse, the world is too wide and cold for poverty! It would have been far better had I never been born!"

"Miss Marian, I hope the Almighty God will take into His consideration the trouble you are in at this present time, which is great indeed; but, chora ma chree, it is an awful thing to fly in God's face!"

"Nurse!" exclaimed Marian.

"I'm sorry to say so hard a thing to you; but to be discontented and fault-finding with our lot *is* flying in His face; He gives us life, Miss, not altogether for our own pleasure, for pleasure would be a poor wake thing for an immortal spirit to be looking after, but for His and our own glory. There is no faith or duty to the Almighty without cheerfulness. Sure, state a case, mavourneen; what pleasure would God take in worrying the life out of us, *whin* he put it in?—instead of bothering ourselves with this, that, and the other, let us *keep our hearts in order*—strive to do our best, and thin lave all to Him. Oh, mavourneen, He would not have looked to you as He did, if He hadn't something in store for ye—whin—whin——"

"When what, Nurse?"

"My darlint, whin you are fit for it. Sure I think ye this blessed minit fit to be a queen—the greatest empress that ever lived—fit to be the wife of the Duke himself, if he wanted

one, and was a little younger—but God knows best. My husband's old *bagnett*, above there, doesn't like the scouring it gets every Saturday, with leather and brick-dust, yet see the good it does it! Sorrow scours us, but it makes us all the brighter."

"You are right, Nurse, I am sure," replied Marian, when her quaint harangue was finished; "I am sure you are right. I will cheer up—I will trust and pray. But my head feels strange—I am so weary, Nurse!"

Nurse Macane looked at her charge, and saw at once that she was really ill; her eyes were unnaturally bright, her cheeks pale—but there was a deep crimson spot glowing on the cheek-bone—and her lips were of a darker colour than usual.

"I ask yer pardon for saying so much, Miss Marian; but, to be sure, now, whin I look at you, I see it's a young woman you are: I forget you're not a dawshy child. Are you thirsty, Miss?"

"Yes, Nurse, I believe I am."

"You brought nothing of clothes with you?"

"Nothing, but what I could not help. You shall not ask for them, Nurse; I do not want to keep anything they gave me."

"No, my dear, no," replied Katty, "it shall be as you like." The kind-hearted creature saw that the poor girl was ill; and, having formed her own resolve, determined apparently to yield to her in all things.

"I will lay on the bed, dear Nurse, and you shall sit by me, as you used when I was a child, and tell me tales—stories of fairies and banshees, and I shall forget how wretched I have been lately."

Nurse Macane busied herself in arranging her little room as if for a holiday; she got a supply of coals and *green* tea (as the universal shop called it); she stuck a sprig of green holly in each of the candlesticks, and complimented the stove with "a rub" of black lead. She converted an old-fashioned flounced apron into a window-curtain, and having arranged all things to the greatest possible advantage,

she dressed herself, like the "pretty Sally" of the old song, "to walk abroad."

Marian, whose eye gleamed as brightly as a basilisk's, watched her movements; and when Katty had completed her toilet by topping her still portly figure with a black silk bonnet, of a coal-box shape, and finally adjusted her habiliments from the reflection of her "dear lost husband's" shaving-glass—the only mirror she possessed—she asked her where she was going.

"Into the street, dear."

"For what, Nurse? I am not ill; my back and head only ache a little."

"Who said you war ill, jewel? I only thought that maybe, as you said you war thirsty, you'd like an orange; and a cousin of my own, mate of a Portingale ship, down at Chelsea College, has oranges throwin' about his house for sport, and I can have 'em for axing. So lay still, my jewel, till I come back."

"Oh, I should *so* like an orange!" said the poor girl, who was sinking fast into the deli-

rium of a fever, and she drew her parched lips together over her pearly teeth. "But you need not have made yourself so smart to go to your cousin's—need you, Nurse?"

"Oh, my dear, is it the mate of a Portingale ship? His wife's quite a lady—with a knot of red ribbons that would knock you down in the front of her cap; two great black cowrie-shells on the mantel-shelf; and such a beautiful Poll-parrot slung across the window!"

"You are not going to Sloane Street—you shall not go!" she exclaimed, with feverish anxiety, doubting that Katty had not told the truth.

"Why, thin," replied Katty, with mock solemnity, "whin did ye ever know me to disgrace myself by keeping low company? I'll bring you such beautiful oranges, and something maybe you could fancy; and thin I'll sit down by ye for the rest of the day, and maybe (if He thinks fit) the Almighty will put some wisdom into our heads. God bless you, my

darlint! Try and go sleep, for you're weak with the throuble. God for ever bless you, and keep you, and be about you night and day!"

## CHAPTER V.

### A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

On the banks of the Thames, at the Middlesex side of the river, between Richmond and Twickenham, stands a small, neat villa, whose garden, a very few years ago, was more remarkable for the trimness and exquisite neatness of its arrangement than for its variety or extent. The lawn, sloping down to the brink of the clear, unruffled river, was smooth as the finest velvet, and was cut into variously-shaped flower-beds, in which invariably blossomed a succession of the gayest and most brilliant flowers. The walls that divided this little perfumed Paradise from its neighbours were covered with roses and luxuriant fuchsias, whose blossoms tasselled the walls with glowing coral. The house is small, and the approach is through a narrow conservatory, which forms a sort of entrance-hall to the two principal

sitting-rooms. The dining-room opens into a library, whose one folding window looks out upon a small bowling-green, surrounded by a close hedge of dark-leaved yew, rising, exactly opposite the window, into a tall and solid-looking arch. The apartment to the left of the conservatory was worthy, from the taste displayed in its decorations, to be the with-drawing-room of a fairy queen—everything looked so fresh, so fair: the Wilton carpet, of a pale sea-green colour, was spotted with pink and crimson roses, which seemed as if no foot had ever dimmed their foliage. The walls were of the same pure tint; and on them, in the most gorgeous frames, were two of the chef-d'œuvres of Rubens, one splendid Titian; and, opposite to the Titian, there hung a veiled portrait. The chairs were of white enamel, ribbed with gold, and covered with watered sea-green satin of the richest quality. Curtains of the same beautiful material fell from gilt arrows over muslin of the purest white and finest texture, which draped to the ground, but through whose delicate folds the landscape was distinctly visi-

ble. In the middle of the room stood a small, circular table, of the most perfect mosaic, supported on a jasper pedestal, and rather more than half round it ran a low divan. From the centre of the ceiling hung an alabaster lamp, the brim of which was wreathed with lilies of the most exquisite carving. The chimney-piece of pure marble supported a magnificent glass and was flanked by two Ionic columns that supported a wide slab from which looking-glass ascended to the ceiling. The corners of the room were lined with double strips of the same characters. Between the windows stood a slab, upon which were displayed three Sevres vases of great beauty. A parrot's cage was partially shaded by the muslin drapery already mentioned; but, when you looked closer, you perceived that the bird, sitting so tranquilly on its perch, was stuffed. On one of the chairs lay a very minute dog; you touched its silken hair—it had been dead for years. Beneath the slab sat a monkey: you might have sworn that, in another moment, he would crack the nut so cleverly placed between his teeth—no, the spirit or

breath, the life of the creature, had long since departed. A cage, filled with Java sparrows and avadavats, next attracted attention: the little creatures looked full of that gay, bird-like animation, which you expect to burst every instant into song—no, you are again deceived.

The mingling of this menagerie sort of trickery with the most perfect specimens of art was singular; but not so singular as the formality, yet beauty, of the room. Vases, illuminated books, and instruments of music, were scattered, or rather placed in the most studied situations about the apartment—every group forming a tableau, where everything was still, silent, and of death-like beauty. A pastille-burner, of richly-chased silver, bright and shining as if from the workman's chisel, stood on the chimney, and diffused a delicious perfume through the apartment. The windows outside were festooned with fragrant flowers; and the whistle of the blackbird, or the splashing of a distant oar, were the only sounds that gave token of a living world in this silent room, the adornments of which seemed to have been

performed by invisible spirits. It was evidently a cherished, if not a hallowed, chamber. The bed and dressing rooms were neither large nor commodious, but they were comfortable, and luxuriously furnished. It must not be forgotten that a small temple overhung the water, the lower part of which was fitted up with a hot and cold bath—the upper, as a sort of reading-room, from which a balcony, shaded by a verandah, jutted over the Thames.

This villa has been described as it appeared in the sunny summer-time. The existence of such dwellings, in such a climate as ours, should be forgotten from November till showery April. Nevertheless, Major-General Sir Henry Peronett—with a string of letters after his name—braved all changes of this changeable climate in his favourite villa, and only visited his superb house in Manchester Square two or three times during the season. He invariably presented himself at one Levee and one Drawing-room; dined once with the Commander-in-Chief; attended one review in Hyde Park; went once to church at Chelsea College; and

thus having, as he called it, performed all the public duties that could be expected from a veteran of seventy-one, he returned to his beloved "Rosery" where he cultivated his own flowers, angled from his own balcony, and indulged his own very peculiar temper and habits.

He makes his first appearance in this history in the month of December: the sun was shining brightly on the Thames—the trees were glittering in their draperies of frosted silver—a fire had been kindled before daylight in the sacred drawing-room, and sparkled brightly within polished bars of the purest steel. The apartment was solitary as usual. The General was at his breakfast-table in the library—the urn and necessary appendages were of plain gold—the chair he sat in was covered with Genoa velvet of the deepest crimson.

The old officer's appearance was as singular as his dwelling. No one could have mistaken him for an ordinary person. He was exceedingly small of stature, and of delicate proportions; his feet and hands as minute as those of a beautiful woman—and there is no perfec-

tion of beauty where they are not exquisitely moulded. His features were prominent, though not large; his nose high and arched; his lips thin and compressed; his eye black as jet, and only seen distinctly when he elevated his thick, shaggy brows, which were of snowy whiteness, and hung completely over his eyes; his forehead was high and wrinkled, surmounted by an abundance of white hair—which, instead of lying straight and smooth, as it generally does in old age, curled and bushed about his head, in a way that showed it was much cared for by his valet.

A staid, respectable-looking woman sat opposite to her master, and prepared his tea, which she handed him as he sat, or rather sunk, in his cushioned chair. His dress was in keeping with his house. His stockings were of white-ribbed silk; his shoes brightly polished; his waistcoat was of white embroidered silk; and the skirts of his brocaded dressing-gown were spread upon his knees; while the ermine collar appeared as if never disturbed from its position round his throat. His cravat

was trimmed with lace, and fell upon his bosom; and the loose sleeves of his dressing-gown, as they fell back nearly to his elbows, showed that his shirt was of the finest linen, and his sleeve-buttons composed of superb brilliants. A beautiful Persian greyhound had laid its head upon its master's knee, and looked wistfully up to the face which, severe as was its ordinary expression, smiled kindly, if not sweetly, upon Hafiz.

"Has this paper been wiped and dried?" inquired the old gentleman, as he looked at the Morning Post.

"Yes, Sir Henry, it is perfectly dry and clean, I assure you."

"It is very odd, Mrs. Upton, that you never remember to put the paper on the right-hand side of the muffineer."

"I beg your pardon, Sir Henry, I did place it at the right hand, but Mullins displaced it; I should have seen to it."

"Thank you, Mrs. Upton. You are sure it is not damp? Very good—very good."

And he forthwith commenced reading a para-

graph, and then taking his tea, toast, muffins, and cold pie, in rotation, and in a manner which proved him an adept in the art of good living. When the General had finished his repast, Mrs. Upton poured some cream into a cup of water and presented it to Hafiz; and then the old General smiled, and, folding the paper, handed it, with a courtly inclination of his head, to Mrs. Upton, saying, as great newsmongers generally do, after reading from the title, to the printer's name, "There is nothing in it." The housekeeper curtseyed her thanks —the breakfast things were removed—the gentleman's chair wheeled round to the fire, and his reading-table placed by his side.

"Please, Sir Henry," said the urbane Mrs. Upton, "would you be so good as to tell me if you expect any one down to-day, and what you would desire for dinner?"

"I dare say," replied the General, "I shall see my grandson this morning. When I was his age, I would have been a-field before this hour; but times are changed — times are changed!"

"Master Peronett's a fine youth, though, Sir Henry—a very fine youth; so much handsomer than Master Godfrey, his cousin!—I suppose the soup, soles, haunch of mutton, with some light things, will be enough?"

"Quite, thank you—quite enough, Mrs. Upton. You think Henry better looking than Godfrey? Well, I can't say I do, Mrs. Upton. Godfrey has the Peronett eye—the Peronett eye; very peculiar that—I never saw any person, not a Peronett, have the eye, and few Peronetts without it. Now, Henry has not *the* eye."

"But the *nose*, Sir Henry! Master Peronett *has* a nose!"

"God bless my soul, Mrs. Upton, to be sure he has!—a nose very like his poor father's. But a nose is of little consequence—the eye—the eye is the thing!"

"Undoubtedly, Sir Henry—the eye is the distinguishing feature."

"In noble families," said the little man, crossing his legs with evident self-complacency, "the eye always *is* the distinguishing feature;

in the Peronett family, as you have heard me before observe, it is peculiarly so. The eye is the window of the soul. No; Master Peronett's eyes are not like Godfrey's: I am sorry for it, for I should have liked the property and the eyes to go together, as they have always done heretofore—but it can't be helped. I wish Mrs. Gibbs would take back these bantams—they are not of a size; now, I like to see five or six of those white bantams exactly of a size—will you have the goodness to get them weighed to ascertain? Good morning, Mrs. Upton. By the way, I forgot to tell you that I fear the housemaid is incorrigible; I assure you the towels in my dressing-room were again folded in three."

"I will see to it myself, Sir Henry," said the housekeeper.

"Thank you, Mrs. Upton; but that is not what I desire; it would never do to set a drill-serjeant to do privates' work—you understand me?"

Mrs. Upton curtseyed again, and had got as far as the door, when she was called back.

"Mrs. Upton, pray do not suffer Master Peronett to imagine that I am at all disappointed at his wanting the Peronett eye—it might make him unhappy—dissatisfied with his eyes; and then, Mrs. Upton, there is no knowing what the young man might do."

"Very true, Sir Henry—he might even think of spectacles!"

General Sir Henry Peronett cast a most indignant look at the housekeeper—who, seeing she had erred, endeavoured to remedy her error.

"I saw young Lord Roebuck in spectacles yesterday, Sir Henry; and I thought—that is, I *heard*—that, being short-sighted, he wore glasses."

"Very likely, Madam; but I do not see what Lord Roebuck's eyes have to do with the eyes of the Peronetts. Perhaps you will inform me?—I wait for information, Mrs. Upton," added the testy old gentleman.

"Oh, Sir Henry, of course there can be no comparison; I ventured on the remark without any object——"

"Which, let me tell you, Mrs. Upton, was like stepping out of the ranks—very unsoldierly conduct for the wife of a gallant officer."

"I will be more careful, Sir," replied the widow, curtseying, and now thinking herself fairly off. But she was mistaken. Sir Henry Peronett, although a brave and dignified soldier, was a martinet on parade, and a most tiresome fidget at home. The untiring activity which had carried him through a victorious career, both in India and on the Peninsula, having now no great object, evaporated in petty regulations and internal arrangements, which were very wearying to his inmates and domestics. But Sir Henry had gained much fame. His manners were, in general, courteous —perhaps from habit rather than feeling. He affected the saving system; but the reckless generosity which, sixty years ago, characterised the British soldier, often betrayed him, even at that advanced period of life, into what younger men would call extravagance. His health was uncertain—consequently his temper was uncertain also. His mind was richly stored

with the knowledge, drawn both from books and men, of bygone years—his perceptions were clear—his personal vanity excessive—and his extreme love of cleanliness and order a source of perpetual anxiety to his servants.

When poor Mrs. Upton had made, as she fondly hoped, her parting curtsey, the General again called her back.

"As to the housemaid, Mrs. Upton, speak to her, if you please, about the towels; and, if she does not attend to them, why there is but one alternative. Yet, do not discharge her until she gets another place: her father was an excellent soldier; and that should never be forgotten by an officer, Mrs. Upton."

At last, Mrs. Upton got fairly out of the room; but the bell rang in about five minutes —the signal-ring for poor Mrs. Upton—after her re-appearance,——

"Has the gardener trimmed those geraniums, and seen to the fire in the green-house?"

"Yes, Sir Henry."

"Very sorry to trouble you, my good lady, but the catalogue of plants?"

"Is quite ready, Sir Henry."

"Thank you, Mrs. Upton; you deserved, Madam—you deserved to be a soldier's wife!"

In less than half-an-hour another peal, and then the coachman was summoned relative to something the General thought might advantage Master Peronett's favourite pony. Then the groom was sent for, then the cook. So that Mrs. Upton often declared that, indeed, in comparison to others, her situation was a sinecure—the only thing she had really to do was to make the General's tea and breakfast. Sometimes, indeed, the old man would get hold of a favourite author; one, perhaps, utterly forgotten—for he was peculiar in his literary taste—with a keen relish for the beautiful in those books which he had read in his youth, and a perfect disbelief that anything since written was worth reading;—then, indeed, he would become so absorbed that his bell and his servants had rest. Or he would angle from his tower, or even establish himself in a punt, provided it had been properly cleaned and cushioned, and there not only

amuse himself, but afford entertainment to sundry cockney fishermen, who astonish the poor little innocent Thames fish by their awkwardness in the gentle craft, and, perchance, after a day's "sport," return to London with two or three dozen of minnows, a few starved pope, a gudgeon or two, and a narrow, slimy, bony barbel. General Sir Henry Peronett, however, lived in the proud unconsciousness of ever having afforded amusement to any individual in the world, except himself: an idea of the possibility of having been laughed at never disturbed his self-importance.

On the morning of his first introduction to those interested in these volumes, he at last subsided into a quieter mode of proceeding—pushed the cushion from beneath his feet, and placed them on the fender, and resting the book he had been reading on his knees, gazed upon the fire, until interrupted by the entrance of an old clerical friend of his, a man alike remarkable for his learning and benevolence.

Lord Augustus Bingham was in every way worthy of the deanery which he held,

and which, if he had been ambitious of worldly distinction, he could long before have quitted for a bishopric; but he was an old, white-headed man, who had exchanged worldly interests and ambitions for those of a higher order.

"I am so glad to see you to-day, Lord Augustus—always glad to see you—but I have been thinking a great deal about that boy, Peronett."

"What, Godfrey?" said the Dean, drawing his chair opposite to the General.

"No, no; my grandson, Henry Peronett. Godfrey, poor fellow, never made anybody uneasy—fine brave boy—never but once exceeded his allowance. Not that he is one of those even exemplary young men you read of in books, fit to cut patterns by. No, no, I think so highly of Godfrey, that were there a war, he should go into the army—the very fellow to lead a forlorn-hope; but it is hardly the profession of a gentleman now-a-days. Fellows with nothing but money to recommend them absolutely getting into the Guards!

Fancy a Peronett taking wine with a tailor's son!"

The old gentleman threw himself back in horror at the bare supposition.

"Then, what will you do with Godfrey?"

"Why, really I don't know—he is just returned from his travels—poor fellow, he has not above three hundred a-year—a good rear-guard, my dear friend, but nothing to advance upon. He would have had the estates, had not my poor son's child been a boy."

"Do you often hear from Mrs. Peronett?" inquired Lord Augustus.

"I cannot think of her with common patience," replied the General, pushing back his chair, which disturbed *Hafiz*, upon which he whined, and was then patted by his master. "She is—that will do, *Hafiz*—she is the most impracticable person in the world—a proud, imperious, ambitious woman, without a heart, Dean—a woman absolutely without a heart! She cares no more for that boy, Peronett, than if he wasn't her son."

"Her health has been very bad, and she

resides constantly abroad," said the good Dean, who had always an excuse ready for every one. "Indeed I do not think she ever recovered her husband's death."

"My poor son's death was a blow to her pride," said the General; "but after he was gone, she manifested no affection for her child. In fact she appeared to me to have lost her senses altogether. I never knew so proud a woman. She was proud, too, of her husband: I think she loved him, and well she might; what a glorious fellow he was! THE DUKE himself says the charge of his regiment at Waterloo was one of the finest of that famous day. A fine brave soldier he was, indeed! But I am speaking of the dead—of the actions of what is clay, or worse, corruption. Oh, God!" exclaimed the old man, shrinking more closely into himself, and drawing his limbs together, "There had need be a bright eternity to recompense us for our toils through 'the valley of the shadow of death!'"

"Nothing *ought* to be that is *not*, my good friend," replied the Dean. "Were you about

to leap a breach, you would look to the glory beyond, *not* into the ravine."

"True, true; but as death approaches, I think of it, as I have seen it in so many hideous forms. It is one thing to watch the bed of him who believes it is a sleep from which he will wake in bliss; but to see the spirit forced from its dwelling by the most bitter tortures—the young—the—the——" The old General paused, exhausted by his own energy, and then added, "Yet, would you believe, nothing is so often before me as the white cheek and parched purple lip of my gallant son: his eye bright to the last—the effort he made to kiss his infant boy, and to place my hand upon it—when his wife, unable to restrain her feelings, fell shrieking on his bosom—I would have died to save him!"

"My dear friend, it is very long since I have seen you so agitated," observed the Dean.

"We'll have some wine," said General Peronett, as he rang the bell. "But the truth is, that my grandson causes me a great deal of uneasiness. I cannot expect him to mope away

his life with me; but more than once, when I have thought him at Oxford he has been in London. Oh, my good friend! if my poor son had, as I wished, married your youngest sister, Lady Isabella—I'm sure she loved him—this lad would have had a mother, of whom he might have been proud, and one he must have loved. Oh! such a mother as she would have made! Well, I'll think no more about it. Is she still at Florence?"

"She is."

"And poor Lady Bab—that was a contrast."

"Lady Bab," said Lord Augustus, gravely, "has, I am sorry to say, written another book, which I am still more sorry to say is to be published."

"Well, to be sure," exclaimed the General, rising, as wine, enshrined in richest crystal, was brought in—"well, to be sure; I am unskilled in these matters; but the idea of women writing is not the most absurd of the three things connected with it—its being paid for, published, and read. Women talk very well; very prettily sometimes, upon certain things;

and so do parrots, when they are properly taught; but you might just as readily expect them to lead an onset or play a good game at chess! My God! what will the world—(Mullins, you have placed the wine at the wrong end of the table—very provoking that, you never will attend to these matters)—Now, my dear Dean——"

"Master Peronett," said another footman, throwing open the door, and the grandson and heir of Major-general Sir Henry Peronett entered. As he has made his appearance before, though under very different circumstances, it will be needless to describe him again. His grandfather held him his cheek to kiss, as if he had been a child, and he did so, as if he had rather shaken him by the hand, "like a man."

"We were speaking of you, Henry, just before you entered," said the Dean. "How tall you grow! you are as tall as I am."

"I am just eighteen; and your lordship's nephew is taller than I am."

"How terribly spattered you are! Can't you learn to ride clean? I don't know how it

was, but your father always came in almost without a spot, Henry," said his grandfather.

"I don't think I'm much splashed, grandpapa, am I?"

"Yes, Sir, you are," replied the General, testily; "and do you call that a coat for a gentleman to wear?"

"This, Sir," said the youth, holding out his arm that his grandfather might examine the texture—"why, it's the real thing—the true bang-up sort—*the*—*thing*," continued the young gentleman, deliberately, while his relative shrank from him as he advanced.

"Stand back, boy—stand back!—it is very unpleasant to be obliged to notice it; but, the truth is, you are offensive—very—tobacco, Sir, and onions! No gentleman, Master Peronett, could have such habits."

"Not in your time, grandpapa, I dare say," replied the grandson, throwing himself into a chair; "but smoking is all *the* thing now, I assure you; and as to the onions, it was only a steak this morning. Not onions either, but garlic—that is *the* thing also!"

"Whatever it was," said the old gentleman, in a tone of displeasure that could not be mistaken, "I desire you will go to your room, and purify yourself. Get off that chair, Sir; it will smell of onions and tobacco for the next three months."

Henry Peronett did as he was desired, and did it with alacrity; and the Dean could hardly help smiling at the irritation this trifle excited in his friend.

"Boys will be boys, you know," he said, while the General lit a pastille; "and the manners of our youths are less restrained, less formal, than they were in our day."

"Less polite, less decent,—less decent, less polite," repeated the General, while he dusted the pastille-burner with his cambric handkerchief. There, Lord Augustus, everything is the same—dust under my very nose—it is the dust these hussies leave every morning that makes me sneeze as I do."

"Do you call that dust, Sir Henry?" inquired the Dean, laughing. "Oh, you should see my library! I never suffer any one to dust

my books except myself; and I perform that task once every six months, perhaps."

"My God!" exclaimed the General. "I wonder you do not sneeze yourself to death."

"And yet you never sneezed at gunpowder —eh, my old friend?"

This little compliment brought the General round again; and by the time Master Peronett came down he had perfectly regained his good temper.

"Do not go yet, my Lord," whispered the youth to Lord Augustus; "and, pray, as you have often done, stand my friend."

"Oh, oh!" thought the Dean, "some fresh scrape, I suppose."

"I must insist on our young friend turning over a new leaf," said the General. "Instead of fagging Greek, he has been fagging London; but after Christmas he must really turn over a new leaf;" and this was said with the air of one who determined a new leaf should be turned.

"Very well, Sir; I shall be very happy to do anything you please."

"Good, good—must have the plan of the campaign for your next six months mapped out, and not deviated from. No ambushes or ambuscades—all straight and fair."

"I'll fag like a Trojan, Sir," replied the youth; "but, indeed, grandpapa"—he called him Governor behind his back—young gentlemen at that time were only moderately acquainted with the disgraceful slang which has since become so fashionable—"I am rather hard-up just now, and should be very glad, indeed, of a little help."

"Henry Peronett," said the General, drawing down his brows into a very severe expression—"I have made you an allowance fully adequate to the wants and luxuries of your station. I provided you with a tutor; I arranged for your college expenses; I gave you a man-servant and a pair of horses; I pay your quarter's allowance in advance, that you may never be driven to the disgraceful necessity of running in debt; I have considered not only your needful expenses, but your absolute fancies. Although I am perfectly companion-

less in this house, dependent on the kindness of such as my old friend here, of whom there are not many left to an old man upwards of seventy, I have never drawn upon your time, nor asked you to spend a single hour with me, except of your own free will; and in return for these indulgences, the only thing I required was, that you should keep within your income."

"Sir, you have been very kind," said the youth, a little touched by the truth and more than usual gentleness of his grandfather's manner. "You have, indeed, been very kind; but this is almost the first time *I overran the constable* to any extent."

"Good heaven! what do you mean?—run over a constable!—have you been disgraced, arrested, or—Oh! I perceive—elegant phraseology—you have, I presume, acquired from livery stable-keepers, horse-jockeys, and who else—who else, Master Peronett? Have the goodness to remember, Sir, that you differ from those worthies, inasmuch as you have not only a grandfather, but ancestors, Sir—ancestors! Speak pure and gentlemanly

English, Master Henry Peronett, or I shall lose my temper."

"Yes, Sir; and, indeed, grandpapa, I would not have troubled you, if—if——"

"If you could have done without me," added the General, whose bitterness increased with every word he spoke. "And now, Master Peronett, will you have the goodness to inform me as to the nature and extent of your wants? When I was your age, I had carried an ensign's colours at the siege of Gibraltar, and taken the standard of the enemy; yet when I came home, Sir, my pleasure consisted in galloping my pony up the Giant's Walk in our old park. I was distinguished, it is true, but I was a distinguished boy, not an anticipated man. Your necessities, Sir, if you please —your necessities?"

The General's usual testy manner was changed to one at once decided and stern.

"Wait, my good friend, till you hear what they are, before you grow so angry," said the Dean. "Really, my dear General, you are a little too impatient in this matter. Come,

come, you have so much of the fire of youth left yourself, that you must make allowances for my young friend. Now, Master Peronett, deal frankly and fairly. I had, perhaps, better leave you together."

"No, no, my Lord!" exclaimed the youth, starting up and seizing the Dean's hands. "Not so; I pray you stay."

"We have had no secrets for nearly thirty years from each other," said the General. "Now, Master Peronett, let me hear your desires."

Henry Peronett put his hand into his bosom, and slowly drew forth his pocketbook. His grandfather brought his chair near to the table —the young man produced two bills and a letter—and having handed the documents to his relative, sat in a state of nervous excitement, which the working of his features rendered apparent. There was a dead silence, interrupted only by the splitting of a perverse slate in the fire, which seemed determined not to be burnt, and the crackling of the papers, which the General patiently unfolded.

"And pray, Sir," inquired the old gentleman, having apparently satisfied his curiosity, "upon what occasion did you deem it necessary to set up your carriage?"

"Not a carriage, Sir; it was only a dennet. I do not want to throw any blame off my own shoulders, which ought to rest there; but it was Trufit who persuaded me to take it of him in part exchange for the chestnut. It looked a smart turn-out; but the first day the springs gave, somewhow, and then I was obliged to send it to Leader's; and the bill, as you see, Sir, for repairs, was more than the dennet was worth; at least the coachmaker would not have it in payment for his bill—that was Trufit's fault."

"Master Peronett," said the General, "I do not ask yet who Trufit is. I remember no such name; but I say, if the young men, whom I see parading about town in those go-carts for laziness, were to break their necks, it would be a blessing to the rising generation. I suppose your reading will carry you so far back as to remember that Alexander did not

deem it unworthy of his prowess to curb Bucephalus. It is noble to back a noble horse, and make him yield to your skill; but you prefer becoming a coachman, and barter!—Well, of course, the rascal must be paid—to—What's this?—'Long rifle'—'Manton'—'pistols'—'small-sword.' My good young man, have you been fitting out a regiment? 'Gloves'—'masks'—'foils!'"

"You wished me, Sir, to be expert in the exercise of——"

"Swelling bills!" interrupted the General, whose ire was rising with the items. "That's what you would say, I suppose. Hem!—tailor's bill—never knew a youth who wanted to ruin his relations in the quickest possible way that did not get into a tailor's books. I must see your tutor immediately."

"He knows nothing about my affairs, Sir," said Peronett, sulkily.

"Doesn't he, Sir?—then he ought to be ——."

The General swore, and the Dean shook his head.

"I beg your pardon, my dear friend," said

Sir Henry; "but flesh, blood, nor bullets, can stand this. Pray, Sir, what's become of your allowance?"

"It's cleared out, grandpapa."

"I'll have no slang, Sir—speak English."

"Spent, Sir."

"You need not speak so loud, Sir; I can hear, Master Henry, and see too—see clearly—more clearly than you think. Now for this letter. Why, what a filthy scrawl! Trufit—Trufit? No gentleman ever wrote this letter, I am certain."

"I used to think him a good-enough sort of fellow, Sir," observed Peronett; "but he drew me in, and left me there, I must confess."

"Why, what jargon is this?" interrupted the General: 'Must have the blunt—sorry to say so.' What does he mean by 'blunt?'"

"Money, Sir."

"'Nothing to be got from Old Cats but scratches.' What has he to do with old cats?"

"His wife, Sir. A way he has of calling her Old Cats."

"Upon my word, grandson, you seem to

have formed a pretty set of acquaintances. Your tutor——"

"Indeed, Sir, there is no use in being angry with him—he had nothing to do with me."

"I believe you spoke truth there."

"I always *do*, Sir," was Henry's laconic observation.

"So," continued General Peronett, "this worthy man, whoever he is, lent you money to bet with, and now wants it back?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Was it only money lent?"

"Nothing more, Sir. I did not ask him exactly to lend it; but he offered and promised not to ask me for it till after I came of age, when, of course, I should have the estate which was settled on my poor father. Now, because we tiffed a little, he turns on me."

"I am heartily glad of it, I am sure," said the General, in a tone which left no doubt of its sincerity. "But what's this?—part of this letter has been cut away. What is the meaning of that?"

Henry Peronett looked annoyed, but made no reply.

"Will you be so good as to inform me what was written here?"

"Something, Sir, which I did not wish you to see."

"Candid, at all events; but I will be as candid, and tell you that I insist upon knowing what it was."

"I hope you will excuse me, Sir," said Peronett.

"I will do no such thing—I will have no half confidences, young man—I must know everything."

"It has nothing whatever to do with those pecuniary matters, Sir."

"Then why was it destroyed?"

Henry Peronett hung his head.

"I command you, Sir, to tell me, under the pain and penalty of my severe displeasure—to tell me instantly—what was written on the slip of paper which you detached from this letter."

"I will tell you, then, grandfather," replied the youth, rising from his seat, as if to prepare for a great effort, "because I am sure you will believe me. Lord Augustus has known me as well as you have done, and I am certain neither ever knew me guilty of an equivocation, much less a falsehood. I have been very imprudent in these transactions; but though I have been the innocent cause of much misery, I am afraid, to a person I would have died to serve—"

The youth paused—he evidently feared he had said too much, and yet he did not see how he could retract—he looked confused—and the General and the Dean exchanged glances.

"Go on, Sir," said the General.

"Proceed, my dear Henry," added Lord Augustus. "Truth told, half the fault—if fault there be—is obliterated."

"I cannot exactly tell how or where I met Mr. Trufit. I saw his face so often, that it seemed rude not to recognise it at last; and then he was a frank-mannered sort of fellow."

"You see a footman's face often enough,"

ing-up Kittens, lanky girls, with red elbows, blue fingers, and long ringlets—young kittens. Psha!"

"No, Sir—he has no children—but his wife, whom he married for her money, had a *protégée*—a poor but most beautiful girl, entirely dependent on her bounty, whom she—indeed they both—treated in the most barbarous, insulting manner. I wish you could have seen her, Sir—you never saw anything so beautiful."

"I should doubt that, grandson," replied the General, coldly; "I have seen most of the beautiful women of my time in Europe. Go on;" and again the Dean and Sir Henry exchanged looks.

"I was a good deal interested about this girl—there was something so superior, so extraordinary, about her. The first time I ever saw her she behaved like a heroine—saved Mrs. Trufit, I am sure, from a thrashing; for Trufit was more than half-seas-over."

"By heavens! what a set the unfortunate boy has got amongst!" exclaimed his grandfather.

"Well, Sir, I cannot tell you the miseries this poor girl endured. She plays and sings like an angel!"

"She used to play and sing to you, I suppose," observed the General, coolly.

"Never!—she never did; but I have often stood under the windows, and listened, and heard from the servants that she was obliged to sing Old Cats to sleep."

"It is a strange story," said the kind Dean; "pray, go on."

"I used to watch to see her in every possible way; but when I did meet her, I don't know how it was, I could hardly speak to her; and she would get away; and yet I used to hear of the cruelties the old ugly capricious fool practised upon her, from the groom, who said the only creature that cared for her was her old Irish nurse."

The lad paused, and moved his position, so as to conceal his blushing face from the keen "Peronett" eye of his grandfather.

"At last I made up my mind that I would speak with her. I longed to tell her that I

felt for her, and how happy I should be if I could make her situation more happy—that if she would treat me as a brother—that is, I should like to have been——"

The youth stammered; and the Dean, seeing thunder gathering on the old General's brow, took up the word with the most placable intentions.

"Unfortunately, Henry, your grandfather and I know too much of the world to be imposed on. Nay, do not let your eye fire. I do not accuse *you* of imposition; but considering the very equivocal position and character of this man Trufit, I cannot help thinking this retiring young lady was a sort of lure, to assist in catching the young spendthrift of a wealthy house."

"You do her bitter wrong, my Lord," replied Henry Peronett, indignantly. "I wonder at you, my Lord! A Christian dignitary to attribute such a motive to Marian Winter!"

"Peace! grandson," exclaimed the General. "Know you to whom you speak?"

"Let him speak as he feels, and I see he

feels," said the Dean. "Did you speak to her?"

"I did, my Lord; and, like a fool, I could say nothing. I took her hand, which she withdrew—hoped she was well—she thanked me, and said, 'Yes;' and then she looked so stately and so cold, and asked me why I wished to see her—that for my life I could not speak; and while my cheek flushed like a weak girl's (as it does now), I trembled as an aspen—I was such a fool!—when Madam Trufit, who had sulked in her own chamber for months, rushed in, and used the grossest language to that noble girl. Before my face she called her names too gross to be repeated — insulted, spurned her! Had she not been a woman I would have sent her headlong—to the devil!"

"What next?" said the General, drily. "I suppose you took her home, eh? and they were glad to be so rid of their encumbrance?"

Notwithstanding the depreciating opinion entertained by the General of his grandson's eyes, they flashed a fire almost as bright as his own: he checked his wrath, however,

and continued as if his grandfather had not spoken.

"Trufit interfered; but in half an hour, when he sought the girl, she was gone."

"Gone!" repeated the two old gentlemen.

"Yes, gone."

"Where you could find her, I suppose," again put in the General.

"Not at first: she eluded all vigilance, and sought refuge with her nurse, where I did find her at last, certainly, in the madness and delirium of fever, attended, and, I believe supported, by her poor Irish nurse. Old Cats trumped up such a story about her and me, that even Darling, the doctor, who had known her from her birth, would not believe, or at least affected not to believe, the story her nurse told of her illness. The poor creature returned to her dwelling in utter despair; and I do not know whether despair or indignation was greatest, when, finding me waiting to hear tidings of the girl, whose danger I had learned from the people of the house, she literally threw the purse in my face, which I offered with the best, and, I may say, most pure feel-

ings. You should have heard the words which gushed, in the impassioned phraseology of her country, from her lips. Bitterly did she curse Mrs. Trufit, and upbraid her for the cruel mockery of protection which she extended to the forlorn girl, only to withdraw it at the very period of her life when it was most needed. I was foolish enough to assure her that she was perfectly guiltless of all fault; and upon that she flew at me. 'Did I imagine that it was necessary to exculpate her darling young lady: who was I, to take such a liberty, as if she could need it,' and I know not what. Well, I could not but love her for her fidelity to the friendless girl, and bore the torrent of unmerited reproof patiently, till her anger, like an hot anvil, became cool from frequent striking; and then, in the most delicate way, I put my purse into her hand, upon which her wrath rekindled. She all but called me names; told me *her* young lady should never be under an obligation to a gentleman; asked me what I took her for, and slapped the street-door in my face!"

"How very singular!" said the Dean.

"You returned to the charge," observed the General, in his peculiar dry way.

"I did, Sir," replied young Peronett; "but strange as it must sound, notwithstanding the young lady's illness, this old Irish devil had, I should say, at the risk of her life, conveyed her away!"

"No clue, fine as a spider's web, left as to her retreat—no handkerchief dropped — no gipsy in the street to whisper where she was," said the General, with an incredulous smile.

"I am afraid your own youth was none of the tamest," said the Dean, gravely; and then, checking himself, he added, "of course you must have seen a great deal of the world."

"The people of the house said that Mrs. Macane 'spirited the young lady away in a hackney coach at night,'" continued Henry; "but did not take any of her things, and owed no rent. I went upstairs, and looked through a slit in the door, which was locked. The only thing I could see was the grate; and strange enough, above it was a framed portrait of the Duke of Wellington; there was also

hung against the wall a bayonet, and, I think, the long plume of a cavalry officer."

"God bless my soul!" exclaimed the General, for the first time perfectly interested in the story. "That is really very odd: are you sure it was the Duke?"

"Quite, Sir."

"And the woman and girl were really gone?"

"The woman and the young lady were really gone, heaven knows where, for I do not. I wrote to Trufit about it; and he wrote to me at the bottom of that letter a sneering, impertinent reply, which," continued the youth, drawing his slight but beautifully proportioned figure to its full height, "I mean to horsewhip him for as soon as I have paid him his money."

"Your most obedient, Master Henry Peronett," said the General. "You accept pecuniary obligation from a man, and then horsewhip him. Is that the new fashionable code?"

"I was taken in by a scoundrel," replied the lad. "Oh! if you had but heard a tithe

of the cruelties that poor girl endured, and how that wretched 'Cats,' as Trufit calls her, has the impudence to say that the old Irish woman is Marian Winter's mother, and that her own first husband, whom she tormented to death, was her father—think of that—a beautiful creature like Marian, with the mind and accomplishments of an angel."

"Is there a society, then, for the diffusion of useful knowledge got up in the spheres, my dear boy," said the Dean, "that you talk of the accomplishments of angels?"

"Useful knowledge!" echoed the General. "What's that? Something, I suppose, connected with the vulgarities of rail-roads and steam-engines. It is difficult to say what men will do at last: I know at this minute a military officer—a brave fellow, too—who has so far forgotten what is due to his profession that he can talk of nothing but paddle-wheels—things that ducks and geese used when they got out of the ark."

"Not immediately, I should imagine," said the Dean, smiling; "for you remember the waters had subsided."

"But this poor young lady, Sir!" put in Master Peronett. "I have told you my story; and you, dear grandpapa; you, dear Lord Augustus—will surely think and devise some plan to find her, and rescue her from misery. I was the innocent cause of her being obliged to quit those hateful people. I only wish you could see her."

"Henry," said the General, "there is a strangeness and a simplicity about your story that interests me; but suppose this girl was found, what course of conduct would you pursue? Look into your heart, boy, if you have one, and answer me."

"I know that if alive she must be in absolute want. If that old fool had only taken my purse."

"The woman did right; but I am not answered."

"If, Sir," said the youth, passionately—"if, my dear, dear grandpapa, you will find her——"

"Pray, *Master* Henry Peronett," interrupted the General, "do you know that you are speaking to *Sir* Henry Peronett?"

"Stay, Sir!" in his turn interrupted the young man, earnestly; "I know I *am* speaking to Sir Henry Peronett, my honoured governor—grandfather, I mean—whose rank is not more distinguished than his virtues, and who knows that it is the duty of every British soldier to succour a woman in distress."

"Bravo," exclaimed the good Dean. "He had you there, I think, my old friend—and it is true. Now, suppose he commands a detachment of the home troops to seek this distressed damsel, what do you propose?"

"I see what you mean," replied Henry Peronett, with a gravity beyond his years. "Save her from misery; see her, hear her story; converse with her; let not a young and beautiful girl like Marian Winter be doomed to the slave-drudgery of service; let her not be cast upon the world homeless, friendless, and parentless; protect her; let me know that she is protected, and I will not inquire where. I will pledge my word of honour to speak with her no more, unless," he added, after a pause, and his coun-

tenance brightened while he spoke—"unless my grandfather himself should wish it."

General Peronett made no reply, but Lord Augustus Bingham seized the hands of Henry Peronett within his own.

"Were I a Roman Catholic," said he, "I would grant you absolution for your past follies; but as a Protestant Dean I can only pray the Almighty to keep you from sin, and to strengthen you in virtue. I am an old, white-headed man; but I remember when I was a boy. I see the sacrifice you make. Nay, never hide those tears; they are no disgrace. I myself will undertake the task; and if the girl be worthy, as you represent her, let her be whom she will, she shall be cared for. There are many romances in real life which would not be believed by those whose calm, monotonous existence is past in cloudless sunshine."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE "NURSE" IN A NEW CHARACTER.

HENRY PERONETT had stated the entire truth. With many faults, the growth of careless habits and dissipated society—he had an open, honest nature. His grandfather's ideas on the subject of education were rather confused. He held the now obsolete doctrine, that a person of high birth and uncontaminated blood could hardly err. He considered and reconsidered his pedigree—gazed with delight upon the coats of arms and crests of his ancestors—and was perfectly satisfied with the result. There was no bar, no blot, nothing that he could object to, fastidious as he was—positively nothing. He had done all that he considered necessary, as a gentleman and a soldier, in giving his grandson a handsome allowance, and in providing a tutor, and commanding the tutor to see him properly entered at Oxford. He had received a high recommendation with that tutor: he

asked him to spend a week at the Rosery every Christmas, and three days at Easter, Midsummer, and Michaelmas, and was satisfied with his gentlemanly manners: his appearance was handsome, and his dress perfection: he never disturbed his furniture, nor spoke above his breath. General Peronett, in one word, never entertained a doubt of his grandson turning out in the end exactly what he desired, in every respect—simply because he was a Peronett.

It was a bitter mortification to his pride to find that the lad had associated with bad company—by which he meant people beneath his own rank in life. But his frankness had made a deep impression on the old man's heart—it is the soldier's virtue; and, before the night closed, he had discharged his grandson's debts—with outward contempt, but an inward satisfaction that he had been guilty of no meanness. He then sent for his tutor, resolving to discharge him also, if he did not account in a satisfactory manner for his inattention to his pupil's concerns.

Leaving the old gentleman to muse upon the extraordinary degeneracy of an age, which could lead even a Peronett to forget his rank and associate with one whom he shrewdly suspected to be little better than a swindler, we must find out why Katty Macane "spirited" her charge away, and where she placed her. No women in the world possess a greater feeling of propriety than the Irish. The poorest peasant-girl has a purity of action and word which enshrines her conduct and character. Frank and free as her vivacity makes her, she never outsteps the modesty of her own delicate nature; and her warm heart and blushing cheek are not more bright than chaste. Despite her campaigns and her intercourse with the world, Katty Macane had an untaught but keen perception of the proprieties and even delicacies of life. When young Peronett offered her his purse, she became at once alive to the scandal which might arise if it was accepted. She knew that it would immediately place her darling Marian under an obligation to a stranger, and that stranger a man—a *young*

man; and her resolve and firmness entitle her to the rank of a heroine. With disease and want staring her in the face, she spurned the proffered aid. She valued Marian's good name far above gold: the reputation of her nursling was, if possible, more dear to her than her life; and though, when she shut the door of her humble dwelling against him, she shut out the only assistance she had any prospect of obtaining, she felt she had done right; and when Peronett, hour after hour, beset the house that contained the suffering Marian—with the watchfulness and ardour of boyhood's first love—Mrs. Macane resolved to remove her.

"It's lending a handle to that bad woman to talk of her," she thought; "and that's what Katty Macane will never do while there's breath in her body."

The morning after Marian's arrival, after she left her in her room, she went to Dr. Darling; and, after the usual quantity of watching and waiting, which the poor must experience at a rich doctor's door, she told

her story—how Miss Marian was "parsecuted," and forced to fly; but the Doctor had heard at least half-a-dozen versions of the tale before — which Miss Womble had circulated with extraordinary pains, as the occurrence had brought about a reconciliation between her and Mrs. Trufit—and had not quite made up his mind whether to interfere or not. Few men have the moral courage to act in open and direct opposition to their best employers; and Mrs. Trufit had been a capital patient. Still, Doctor Darling was anything but heartless; he was kind, but lacked courage; and when he heard that Marian was ill, he promised he would call and see her; and he really at the time intended to do so; but the Doctor was not as young as he used to be, he had grown stout—and grey —had a large family, or fancied it so—and Miss Womble declared he was subject to rheumatism, gout, and lumbago—he was moreover, a doctor in demand; and somehow or other, patients that were not of consequence slipped out of his memory more quickly than patients that were; and, though he intended, he did

not remember, in this instance, to fulfil his intention. Again poor Katty called, and left word that "Miss Marian, as he knew of, in Little Blackland's Lane, was very bad intirely;" but what fashionable doctor's servant ever troubled his master by repeating "pauper messages." At last, however, the Doctor ordered his carriage to drive down Little Blackland's Land, and stopped at some number or another, but he had forgotten the right one. Then, indeed, he really felt sorry; and the footman was obliged to inquire at the green-grocer's; but the green-grocer could only say, that, from what he heard, he believed Mrs. Macane had left the street altogether. Then, indeed, Doctor Darling, after one or two pricks from his better angel, denominated Conscience, which told him plainly and loudly enough that he had neglected a poor friendless girl, whose life, perhaps, had paid the forfeit of his negligence; then, indeed, he endeavoured to quiet his silent monitor; and when he could not so easily accomplish the task, he plunged his body deeply into the cushioned

and luxurious corner of his carriage, and his mind into the soporific pages of the most be-puffed magazine, where, if he did not find excitement, he certainly found repose.

Katty was so firmly resolved that no stigma should attach itself to her ward, that she acted with more precipitation than prudence. The probability of her darling wanting the necessaries of life would have crushed a less hopeful spirit; but her own beautiful aphorism, that "There is a silver lining to every cloud," supported her under privations which no mere worldly wisdom could have struggled through. Portion after portion of her wardrobe was disposed of; after a time she paid off her small arrear of rent, and removed her little furniture. She managed to procure Marian once or twice the benefit of medical advice; such as is vended at shops with green and blue circular bottles in the window; but as such practitioners seldom continue long in attendance where they do not expect large fees, Katty had the consolation of hearing that what the patient especially required was quiet and low diet: then, when the fever disap-

peared, and was succeeded by the extreme of debility, Katty herself knew that Marian needed the cook rather than the physician; and proud would she have been to fulfil the task, to which there was but one slight difficulty,—she had nothing to cook. Katty had conveyed her patient to the higher neighbourhood of Bayswater; and there, in the small garret of a lofty house, where there were many lodgers, she watched over her with a tenderness which it is supposed mothers only feel towards their offspring.

Marian's sufferings had been intense; and when fever had quite left her, she was but the shadow of her former self. Katty might be said to hope in the very face of despair: she had parted with everything of value she possessed, except the gown and shawl she wore, and was perpetually drawing on her invention to keep Marian in ignorance of her wants.

"The day feels cold, Nurse," said the poor girl, drawing her worn limbs closely together upon her pallet; "surely you are not going out without your cloak."

"Oh, my jewel! it's melting alive I am with the heat—it's a beautiful day intirely."

"Is it, Nurse? Then, it is I who am cold, and not the day; and though my eyes do not see the sun shine, yet you say he does shine. Will you put your cloak over me, as you will not wear it?" she added in a feeble voice.

"Sure I would—only it's gone to be scoured—cleaned, mavourneen—to make it dacent against you're able to quit your bed, and take a walk with your own nurse in the sunshine."

Marian, though accustomed to misery, had no idea of pecuniary want; she little suspected that the tea and arrow-root she had taken during the last three days was the produce of poor Katty's last available article of clothing. Marian's illness had been of such a nature that she could not leave her to procure employment. Her employers—her "best families," as she called them, had been unable to find her when they wanted her, and had engaged younger and stronger women. She went at night from house to house, and succeeded once, perhaps, out of ten times in pro-

curing something in the way of nourishment for "a poor sick creature, who had no one to look to her;" but people soon get tired of bestowing, and, perhaps, with the kindest intentions, cannot continue their liberality; and at last Katty was obliged to beg assistance from one or two of her poor country folk. She prevailed on her priest to give her two or three shillings; and on another occasion engaged to "work out" five shillings she had borrowed from a friendly laundress. People who lend expect interest; and Katty was obliged to give three days' labour for what would have only paid two: but this was not all—Marian's weakness, instead of diminishing, increased; and when the single and affectionate-hearted woman returned from a hard day's work, her hands and arms white and wrinkled from the effects of her scalding labour, she found her patient in a wretched state of exhaustion.

"All the day I have been alone; no one in this miserable place came near me. I do think I am dying," she said, leaning her head upon Katty's bosom.

"Oh, my blessed child! keep up your heart. I could not help it; I was forced to stay. I'll get ye a cup of tay in a minute."

"If I had but a little wine," murmured the fainting girl.

"God help me!" thought Katty; "I haven't a stitch left to buy her a glass of wine; and they wouldn't advance me a halfpenny at the laundry to night, though I did demean myself by asking it. Oh! the Lord direct me—the Lord direct me!—How is it with you now, my darlint?"

"I don't know, my Nurse; but it is a cold world to live in; and if it was God's pleasure to take me, I would be thankful—would not you, Nurse?"

"Don't break my heart—don't, Miss Marian—you'll be bravely by and by—loosen your arms from my neck, my darlint, and I'll go out and get you some wine. There, bless them! how thin and white they are," she continued, kissing the soft skin which hung around the slender bones, while tears rolled down her furrowed cheeks.

"Have you money, Nurse?" murmured Marian; "but even if you have, you must not spend it in wine for me."

"Take yer arm from my neck, my darling," said the nurse.

"I was selfish to think of it," persisted the girl.

"Keep asy till I come in, and don't be telling lies on yerself, my blessed young lady! You selfish, indeed! Pugh, then, I wish all the world was like you! Oh, keep asy there! I'm gone; I'll be back in no time; though maybe not; for there isn't a good drop of wine to be got at this end of the town. There's Blucher the baste, and the candle, for company —keep up yer heart—trust in the Lord—and remember *there's a silver lining to every cloud* — Christ comfort you, my angel!"

Katty shut the door so quickly that the wind blew out the candle's slender flame, and Marian's voice was too feeble to reach her as she posted down stairs. The sick girl drew the cat more closely to her; its warmth was comforting, and then she fixed her eyes upon the clouds that

were careering in the heavens, while the wind rattled the small window in its casement: her imagination had acquired a dangerous ascendency over her. She had been latterly much alone, and all the noble exertions of her devoted nurse had failed to procure her a sufficient quantity of nutriment; thus her weakness had affected her mind. She had existed upon fevered fancies; and unable to turn from one side to the other, she imagined the white fleeting clouds pictured a thousand things and a thousand events. It was a clear star-light night, every thing about her looked dim and shadowy—cold and lifeless. At length the moon rose before her, and she felt as if it were the eye of the Almighty fixed upon *her*, and *her* alone of all His created beings. At first she shuddered, and damp chills stood upon her brow; she blessed the cloud that shrouded the spectral light from the intense gaze which she had not the power to withdraw, and then she repeated one by one the prayers she had learnt in childhood: those precious spells worked silently and surely towards a blessed end. Wearied and worn, and trembling, she

gradually sunk into a sleep, which if not refreshing was, at least, peaceful.

In the mean time Katty descended the ill-contrived, ill-lighted, and dirty road, dignified by the name of Church Street, and immortalized by the residence of our greatest living artist. She reached High Street—the clock of old Kensington Church struck nine.

"There's no use," she whispered to herself, while dashing a proud tear from her eye, "in bothering about the matter, I *must* beg in the street, for I've no other way of saving the life of *my heart's blood*."

The nurse walked slowly along the darkest side of the road leading to Kensington Gore, and paused several times before well-dressed men without, however, being able to speak; she held out her hand as they approached: one forseeing her intention told her gruffly "to go to the parish," another flung her a penny; that penny was all she collected between Kensington Church, and the gloomy corner of the Gloucester Road.

"must grow boulder," she thought, as

she crossed the turnpike; "this will never do."

The gate keeper was joking the tipsy driver of a cart about a certain liquid called "hot," which turned out to be boiled gin and beer, and exchanging sundry information as to the quantity a friend of theirs, "Long Summers," could despatch in half-an-hour. Katty heard their discourse, as may be supposed, without being at all interested therein, but she was looking up the road and down the road to see if any one approached at all likely to be influenced by benevolent feelings. A woman advanced, comfortably muffled in a cloak, carrying a market-basket. Katty schooled her knees to a curtsey, and tried a few words of earnest entreaty for the good "of a poor sick child just out of a fever." The kind-hearted woman gave her a few half-pence, saying, "God help you—I have children of my own."

"Them sort of ould women are the easiest touched," said Katty, "if one could be sure which was which. I always observed the married were fat and the ould maidens thin, but

since the bustles came in it's very hard to make out which is which." Thinking this over she proceeded a few yards farther.

A thinly clad, yet showily dressed young woman passed her; there was a feverish flurry and haste about her, yet she turned and looked at the nurse. Katty remembering the success of her first curtsey dropped another, but she had hardly done so when she thought within herself: "I needn't have done *that;* them sort never give" She was wrong—she did the poor frail, but kinded-hearted girl injustice; she turned, and the long soiled ostrich feather that garnished her faded bonnet floated in the wind. "I haven't much to give," she observed; "but those who need charity should not refuse." She put sixpence into her hand.

"God reward you!" said Katty, who was struck by the act and the expression, so different from what she had expected.

"Better *He should forget me,*" she replied in the tone of a broken spirit, and resumed her hasty walk.

"Poor craythur," murmured Katty. "The

Lord, in heaven, look down on ye, and turn yer heart from sin, and rise ye up some friend, that will think that while there is life there is hope, not only for the body but the soul! There's a dale of your sort would quit their way of life if they'd be trusted; but the good will tell a woman to repent, though they won't believe she can do it. It's a quare world—so it is—mighty quare. Lord look down on ye, any way."

The gate of a detached house stood open, a carriage was waiting by the footway, there were lights in the upper part of the dwelling, and a footman in rich livery stood at the hall door.

"Oh to see the loads of candle-light and slashings of finery going to waste there!" again murmured the nurse. "Enough of lavings between the quality and the qualities' quality to nourish half a dozen poor!"

"You'd better not go in there," said the servant, who was waiting with the carriage. "The gentleman who lives there is one of the guardians of the poor, and he'll countenance no beggars."

"And who told you, young man, that I was a beggar," said the ready-witted Katty; "though for the matter of that we're all beggars; if, ye see, we should ask advice, that's begging; if—but I dont want to trouble you, or throw away my philosophy.—I'll go in and take my chance of seeing Mr. ——, I'm always forgetting his name."

"Mr. Manvers won't see you."

"That's quare," replied Mrs. Macane, "and he my Guardian."

"Your guardian!" grinned the footman.

"Didn't you say he was the guardian of the poor!" said Kitty, as she marched with a confident air up the gravel walk: before she reached the door there was a noise of many words within the hall. "Make your mind perfectly easy, I assure you she is doing charmingly — delightfully — much better, my dear Sir, than we had any reason to expect. God bless you; every trace of danger has disappeared; rely upon my word, you know I never tell an untruth."

"Oh, thin, God forgive you, Doctor Darling,

dear!" exclaimed the nurse, laying her hand upon the arm of the most silver-tongued of his profession, as with a dignified and quiet air he descended the steps leading to the portico. "I'd be sorry to gainsay you, Sir; and yet, Doctor, sure it wasn't the *bright ornament* you stuck too altogether when you promised so faithful to come to see the young lady who's still at the death's door on me!"

"My dear Mrs. Macane," replied the Doctor, as warmly as if he had been saying "my dear Lord," "I am delighted to see you."

"See that now!" interrupted Katty; "The pleasure's mutual, Sir."

"Thank you, Mrs. Macane; tell me where you live, I want so particularly to see Miss Marian. A person whom I cannot mention just now is warmly interested in her favour."

"My la! and time too!" ejaculated Katty, thinking of Mrs. Trufit. "But, Sir, honey! she's a dale better in regard of the physic, and like every one that can—she's better without it."

"True," replied the Doctor.

"But it's nourishment she wants; the cook, Doctor."

"Not a better cook in London than yourself," said the Doctor; for he knew how to pay a compliment properly.

"Thank ye kindly, Sir, for your good word; but troth, Sir, it's something better than gravel hash or free-stone soup I'd like to thry my skill on, for a sick lady;" and the comic smile vanished from her lip, as stopping suddenly and placing her lips near the doctor's ear, so as not to be overheard by the servant—she added in a low and agonizing whisper the tone of which could never be forgotten—"As God is true, Sir, she's starving!" Involuntarily the doctor drew out his purse; his first impulse was to press it into Katty's hand, but he thought better of it, extracted a guinea, and again asked her address. Katty was proud, and did not like the physician should see the utter misery of her dwelling, although she had confessed her poverty!—"I forget the right name that they've put upon it—the

number, Sir—and that: so if you will give me lave, I'll just take the liberty of calling at your honour's house to-morrow morning."

"Very good, very good—you won't forget."

"Forget—oh! never fear, Sir—'Tisn't I that 'll forget, not I, indeed, Doctor,—forget, indeed! Oh, no fear in life of that, God bless you, Sir!"—And Katty began to retrace her steps, turning the coin over and over again in her hand, hoping, yet scarcely daring to believe, that it was a "rale goolden guinea"—she stopped under the first lamp-post, assured herself of its identity, and kissed it with as much delight as if it had been a holy relic. "Prosperity to you for ever, my yellow beauty, and a long life to the royal face that's put upon you! Sorra a one rich or poor but delights in the royal countenance—and the oftener they see it the betther they like it; and its lonely and could and broken-hearted the pocket feels that ye'r not in, ye shining desaver—it's sorrowful to think, that though you've no legs, it's faster ye run than if ye had—and that's the worse thing yer worst foe

can say of ye, my yellow boy! I never lookt upon one of yer sort or kind with a quarter the joy I do upon you," and Katty set off with the rapid pace of a "light heart," to procure the luxury Mary had so bitterly reherself for desiring. She entered one of the showy temples where the low and the dissipated congregate—

"Glass of Gin—Cream of the Valley?" said the man at the bar.

Katty was tempted,—she had once been rather fond of something stimulating, but she had conquered the habit altogether; a great conquest for such a woman. It was a cold night, and she had "never been the worse for what she took;"—but in an instant the temptation passed from her; she felt she was Miss Marian's guardian; and while the bleared eyes of half-intoxicated men and women were turned upon her, she coolly and consequentially replied, "A bottle of your very best ould crusted port, if you plase."

"Port!"—repeated the man, putting down the glass he held between his finger and thumb.

"Yes, port—fine genuine *Vin d'Oportey*, as we cal it abroad"—for Katty loved to show off, "and be quick, if you plase, young man, for I'm in a hurry," she added. When the waiter returned with the wine, the nurse electrified him, before he had time to put it down. "Is that the way you carry ould crusted port boult upright like a souldier at drill?—See there now," she continued, holding it up to the light —"see there now! if the bee's wing isn't floating about it, like sprats in the Cove o' Cork: I 'll not have that bottle, my nate young man—I want the best article—the best article I'll pay for—the best article I 'll have; and if you don't like to let me have it, I'll go somewhere else, that 's all."

There was something about Katty, as she stood with her arms folded, her gaunt and bony figure drawn to its full height, and her eyes sparkling like "black diamonds," that made the waiter disappear with the bottle, and return with another, which he carried so as to satisfy Mrs. Macane, who paid for it, as if her pockets were filled with gold, took her change,

and walked triumphantly forth from the gin-drinking crowd.

How completely circumstances darken or gild events!—Katty felt rich, and without knowing why — for she had no analyzing powers—she also felt joyous and happy as a mountain girl. Retracing her way up Church Street, she no longer thought it long, and dark, and dirty; the toll of the church clock had music in it; the aspect of all things had changed with her improving fortunes. She saw a woman half naked, shivering with cold, on the step of a narrow door, and with more generosity than forethought, dropped the halfpence and silver she had received in charity into her lap. "After all," whispered her proud spirit, "that makes it borrowing, not begging." It would have yielded the kind and benevolent feelings that existed in the Doctor's bosom real pleasure if he had seen the perfect happiness which his gift produced in Marian's miserable room. The next morning a small fire blazed cheerfully in the little grate, the cat had an entire "ha'porth" of milk to himself, tea was

accompanied by a "new-laid egg" for the invalid, and the smallest possible quantity of fresh butter spread upon a white roll. Katty enjoyed the intense delight of seeing her patient eat as if she were hungry, and, despite her tremor of the former night, of hearing her talk in a feeble voice, but with tolerable spirits, of future and better times. Katty left their little room on some secret mission, brimful of hope; but morning, noon, and evening came, and she had not returned.

## CHAPTER VII.

### KATTY MEETS AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

When Katty arrived at Doctor Darling's door he had gone out—into Sloane Street the servant said,—and Katty, rather than wait about, thought she would walk along the street, little doubting, in the vivacity of her imagination, that he had gone to Mrs. Cavendish Trufit. This opinion was confirmed when she saw, as she imagined, his carriage standing at the well-known door: as she reached it, however, she perceived she had been mistaken, but she paused and looked down the old steps, and recalled (with strong feelings of indignation against the mistress of the house) the helplessness of the infant, the petted days of childhood, and the injustice which had been so cruelly worked out against poor Marian. Her pride, combined with a sense of Marian's dignity, had prevented her ever applying there in their necessities: it must be confessed, there-

fore, she was in no gentle mood when the door opened, and out came the lady herself. Katty (who had renovated her appearance) stept forward, and confronted Mrs. Trufit before she reached the carriage. The nurse really believed, from what the physician had said, that Mrs. Trufit had in some degree repented the evil she had done, and though her blood boiled, she made what she considered rather a respectful curtsey, and began, "If you plase;" but the instant Mrs. Trufit saw her, and heard her voice, she screamed loudly in her usual hysteric way, and called her by a name too gross to repeat. In an instant, all Katty's animosity deepened into more than its usual bitterness. Mrs. Trufit, all agitation and blonde lace, backed into her hall, crying to a tiny boy, of what is now called the "Tiger" species, to "act like a man." Katty however, kept her ground, overturned the footboy without knowing that she did so, and stood at last, like an inspired Sybil, before the weak, vacillating woman, whose folly and caprice had altogether overwhelmed the gentle promise of her petted youth. Katty being now fully convinced that she had mistaken the

Doctor's meaning, gave full loose to the invective which Mrs. Trufit's false and disgraceful assertion had provoked, while the lady persisted in the affirmation, that Katty was Marian's mother, and that she had seduced the affections of her dear departed and excellent first husband. At last, the coachman finding the noise continue, remembering that his master was out, and not exactly knowing to what extremities the *fracas* might proceed, called to a policeman, and Mrs. Trufit gave poor Katty Macane in charge, declaring that her life was in danger. The nurse for the first time awoke to a sense of the folly of her conduct, turned to the man, and said, "I'll go fair and asy with ye, my man, don't lay a finger on me; I'll folly ye straight enough; but you plase to remember, that I've neither spoilt the rouge on her cheeks, nor the curls of her wig. She has slandered me, and what is worse, she has planted a slander upon the grave of one of the best and kindest husbands that ever was tormented by a could, heartless, fanciful evil-minded woman. Ay do, send yer *Buckeen* of a husband to appear against me, and then

he'll give it to you as bad, or may be worse, than you do to others."

She walked to the dining-room door, and then suddenly turning round and looking for a moment at Mrs. Trufit, who was kicking and sobbing, for once in her life, in *real* hysterics, she dropped upon her knees. Her large handsome features, pinched as they had lately been by cold and poverty, assumed an expression of fierce and determined vengeance. She elevated her right arm, and pressed the other across her bosom as if she desired to keep down the violence of her emotion, and her voice rolled round the room and filled it with the fulness of its tones.

"I curse," she exclaimed, "all who slander the memory of those who put a roof over their heads, and bread into their mouths!—I curse those who blight the bud before it blossoms with the north-east wind of false words!—I curse those who slander the honest widow; and whoever so does, may the disgrace they try to put upon others shroud them in their coffins—may their names mildew on the earth, and may the

heavy curse of Katty Macane rest upon them till the day of their death, Amin!—Now I'll go with ye," she continued, when her frightful words were ended, and she arose from her knees—"now I'll go with ye—and the devil do ye *good* with what ye'll get, the whole of ye."

For a time the violent excitement she had undergone kept up her spirits; but when she thought of the poor sick girl, whose very existence depended on her, her heart sunk within her, and heavy tears rolled down her cheeks.

"Shall I be tried, as they call it, to-day?" she inquired.

"Yes, we'll have ye up immediately; it is now only eleven, so there'll be plenty of time."

"And when will I get away?"

"Oh, that entirely depends on the magistrate—it may be a fine, or three months at the Mill, or a week—they're good kind of gentlemen at Queen-square."

Katty shuddered. "Are you an Irishman?" she inquired; "because if you are, maybe you'd do your countrywoman a good turn?"

The man laid his hand on her arm, thinking she wanted to get off.

"It's not that," she said; "but I have only one friend in the world who can stand up for me; and he's Doctor Darling."

"Does he know you?"

"He does, and well," replied Katty. "And all I want is to have a bit of a note sent to him immediately, that's all, as ye say I'm to be tried to-day; and may be you know an old man by the name of Paddy Charley, who has a boy—indeed I believe two or three in the police?"

"It's odd it would be, sure enough," replied the fellow, "if I didn't know my own father."

"Well that is wonderful!" exclaimed Katty. "How boys do be growing into men, making ould women of us! Which of the grawls are you?"

"I'm Charley," replied the six foot Irish youth, gruffly; "and I mustn't be talking to every one who knew my governor; because he's known, I do think, to every scamp, male and female, in the whole district."

"You were always a surly cur," muttered Katty. "I remember how sturdy ye wanted the purse to stuff in your mouth, many good years ago, but it's to the fore still, and will do good yet—plase God."

Silent, if not surly, as he certainly was, he nevertheless despatched a message immediately to Doctor Darling; and Katty was kept in safe custody. In all her travels and adventures she had never before entered a police-office, and she connected something very magnificent with something very terrible in its appearance and arrangements; but her mind was so thoroughly imbued with the idea of Marian's loneliness, and strong indignation against Mrs. Trufit, that she did not feel as keenly, as she otherwise would, the degradation of entering the abode of justice in Queen Square.

"And how long am I to be kept standing here, if you plase, Sir?" said she at last to a constable.

"Till the witnesses arrive," replied the man; "and do not ask any more questions."

A woman close to her in the waiting-room

was weeping bitterly; her son, a child of about ten years old, who had been already twice in the house of correction, was again before the magistrates, and she feared, and yet hoped, he might be sent out of the country, well-knowing it was the only thing to save him from the destruction she could not avert. He came from examination, looking as hardened and as cold as the ice of a Russian winter, clapped his seal-skin cap on his head, and witnessed his mother's tears without shedding one—he had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment in Coldbath Fields. Katty's blood curdled in her veins.

A young Irishman took precedence of Katty on the charge of walking up to his middle in the Thames, and then tumbling in altogether, to the manifest danger of his own life, and the exceeding annoyance of the policeman, who was of course obliged to go in and fetch him out. His defence simply was, "That he was raythur the worse for what he had taken, and was also a trifle hot—wanted to cool himself, but would not take that means of doing so

any more;" the policeman assured the magistrate with a very grave face, that the prisoner had the greatest fancy in the world for "cold baths;" that it wasn't the first, second, or third time he had taken them after the same fashion; that in the neighbourhood of Millbank, the moment the police saw Dan Sweeney, one of them prepared for a plunge, well-knowing that, despite their watchfulness, he would certainly get in, leaving them to get him out as they best could. Just as the magistrate was warning the prisoner of the dangerous nature of cold baths, if taken without medical advice, and venturing even on a magisterial pun, that as he was so fond of them, he might be the better for a short residence in *Coldbath Fields*, a carriage drove up to the private door, and Mr. Trufit and Doctor Darling took their seats upon a long green bench, which reaches nearly from the private door to three overgrown chairs, tempting to the belief that the magistrates if not very great, are undoubtedly very big, men. The chairs and the magistrates ought

certainly to be great together, for the room and its fittings are poor and unsightly. Over the chimney a round dirty-faced clock marks the time the gentlemen occupy in reading the papers, talking to each other, and dispensing justice; an old book-case fills up the space between the dusty windows, and the table in front of the magic chairs is scooped out in the centre so as to allow the witness to approach very near while he gives his evidence.

The Doctor and Mr. Trufit were treated with all the consideration which the highly respectable character of the one, and the furred coat, elaborate waistcoat, and gold chains, of the other commanded. The tiny tiger, and a pale-faced housemaid were also in attendance, and Doctor Darling assured the magistrate that Mrs. Trufit was unable to attend: he might have added that she was in a state of more perfect happiness than she had been for years. She was about to become an object of universal attention to everybody—her name would be in the papers—her "suffering virtues" would, at

last, come under public notice—she would be designated as "that amiable and excellent woman"—in short, she would be notorious!

Her husband was in no such mood. After quarrels—sufficient to make the greatest believer in domestic felicity sceptical as to its being "a state of perfect bliss"—he had succeeded in persuading, or threatening her to withdraw a particular sum of money from the funds, and place it at his disposal. Mrs. Cavendish Trufit's blonde lace — her ring-tailed monkey—her husband's tiger—and herself, were on the way to fulfil this object, when Katty's unlooked for appearance postponed, at all events, the accomplishment of his desires. It may thus be readily believed that he attended the office boiling over with disappointment and ill-temper.

When Katty Macane entered, she made a respectful curtsey to the magistrates, and had just time to think within herself, "Well, it's no great things of a room; and his worship, a fine, portly gentleman, would look a dale handsomer if he was dressed like a judge." This

thought passed rapidly through her brain, and then her quick sight recognized Doctor Darling. Mr. Trufit raised his glass to his eye, and inquired if that was the "assaulter." The warm thrill of pleasure which succeeded the nurse's recognition of the physician was followed by one of astonishment. Instead of attending to the evidence, she turned her head first one way then another so as to scan Mr. Trufit in every possible point of view, accompanying each investigation with that, I believe, peculiar, noise which the Irish make when surprised, or in trouble, by striking the tongue against the roof of the mouth, producing an *unspeakable* sound resembling "Tach—tach —ta!" And then again twisting her head and her body about in so singular a way as, at last, to attract the attention of the magistrate

"Make that woman keep still."

"Yes, yer honor, I am still," answered Katty, curtsying, "as still as a mouse that's neither seen nor heard." Then, in an under tone, "May the Lord spare me my senses— Tach—tatch—ta!"

The constable whispered, "Keep quiet, my good woman."

"Mayn't I pray to the Almighty God to save me my senses, Sir?" replied the Nurse.

"No!" answered the constable.

"Oh, then, that's a poor case, Sir," said Katty, in a half whisper, "and I never heard tell of the like, and them there swearing and nothing said to them, and I to be checked for praying!—Well! the like o'that!"

At last the magistrate interfered. "My good woman," he said, kindly, "wait till the evidence is given, and then you may speak."

Katty curtsied her thanks; but not satisfied with silent gratitude, continued—"Thank you, my Lord, it's a question I want to put to *him*;" and she stretched forth her hand and pointed to Mr. Trufit. As she turned her face, so that as much light as the dust permitted to enter the windows rested on it, Trufit returned her gaze, and in an instant the entire expression of his countenance changed from bullying ill-temper to positive horror. By a violent effort he appeared to command himself

though he did not venture again to return her fixed and assured look, he took every opportunity of glancing at her from beneath his dark eye-lashes; his face, which at first flushed, became deadly pale, and he pressed his lips together to prevent their trembling.

"You must not speak yet," replied the magistrate, who had not observed the expression of either countenance: "all in good time."

"Thank God for that same! Depind on it I'll spake in good time, your worship," and she glanced at Trufit.

"Will *you* hold *your* tongue?" said the magistrate, deliberately.

"I only repated your own words, Sir," said the talkative Nurse; "that I would spake in good time, which I shall be proud to do—soon as convanient."

But the magistrate was growing angry—

"My good woman," he replied, "will you be silent?"

"I'd go from this to Jericho to oblige so handsome a gentleman as yer honor."

The magistrate drew his hand across his

good-tempered countenance to conceal the smile which the cunning compliment excited in his own, and in every other face in the room.

"If you don't be quiet," whispered the constable, you'll have three months at the tread-mill."

"Thank ye for your accommodation; I'm not over-fond of exercise, so I'll not trouble it," she answered in the same low tone; but the next minute exclaimed—"Och murder! To see that little chap of a tiger-cat book-sworn! What's that he says?"

This inquiry was occasioned by the sight of the juvenile groom kissing the holy book.

"Oh, holy Saints!" she continued, in defiance of all efforts made to keep her in order. "Hear to that, now! Why, you dawshy creature, don't tell lies—I never kicked ye down—I walked over ye as gentle as if you war wren's eggs!"

The magistrate threw himself back in his chair, greatly annoyed at the utter impossibility of keeping the prisoner quiet, and said to

the constable, "If that woman does not suffer the evidence to proceed she must be removed —it is quite unbearable."

"True for yer worship, it is so," replied the undaunted Nurse; "bothering your honor with their *hogmaganys*. Ask that gintleman (now this is the last word I'll spake till you bid me)—ask that gintleman, that the chains are hanging on the wrong way, *if there isn't witnesses enough to the fore*?" And her eyes fixed upon Mr. Trufit, with a meaning which at once arrested the magistrate's attention.

It must be confessed that Mr. Trufit looked the greater culprit of the two; he changed colour, and in the brief pause that succeeded, rose up, sat down, and after struggling with considerable embarrassment, managed to say, "It was Mrs. Trufit's express wish that the charge should be dismissed altogether."

This announcement caused evident astonishment to Doctor Darling; and every one in the office seemed equally surprised.

"It has been gone into," observed the ma-

gistrate, gravely; "and I fear is one of too serious a nature to be lightly dismissed — a woman waylays——"

"Och murder!" exclaimed Katty in an under-tone.

"A lady— insults—pursues her into the house—assaults her servants——"

"I beg your worship's pardon," interrupted the Nurse; "sorra a finger I laid on them."

The magistrate continued without attending to her. "The lady is too ill to venture here"—

"My lord, nothing in life ails her but a trifle of hysterics," again said Katty, but in a somewhat subdued tone.

The good-natured justice went on as if she had not spoken.

"Just as the assault is proven—the prosecutor, at first, so keenly anxious to further the ends of justice—turns round——"

"A short turn," interrupted Katty.

But the magistrate this time was too much annoyed by the breaking up of his eloquence, to bear with it as he had done before—he looked sternly at the prisoner, and said, "Woman, if

you do not remain silent I'll commit you for contempt of court."

"Yer honor would be in the wrong—for I hould yer honor above all contempt," said Katty.

"Constable, keep that woman quiet!" exclaimed the magistrate.

"I'll try, your worship, but it's impossible, unless I gag her—I never heard so nimble a tongue in a woman's head—and that's saying a great deal."

"I had," said the magistrate, endeavouring to resume his eloquence, by no means an easy matter, "I had arrived at—at——"

"At *the turn* exactly, yer worship;" said Katty, curtseying with a respect ten times more provoking, under the circumstances, than positive rudeness.

The magistrate looked round the court, hardly knowing how to treat the impracticable Katty. But every eye, if not every lip, except Mr. Trufit's, was smiling; and so, fearing he could not achieve a glorious victory, he resolved to make a good retreat.

"Mrs. Katty Macane, that is your Name I presume?"

"Yer honor never presumes too far," replied the gracious Nurse; "the name they put on me at my baptism was Katherine—but I've no objection to Katty for short, as yer worship seems in a hurry."

"Then, will you be so good as not to reverse the order of things? Will you, the prisoner, permit me, the magistrate, to speak?"

"I've no objection in life, yer honor, to the revarsion of anything that's good—and sure it's a pleasure to hear so fine a spoken gentleman as yerself discoorsing." And Katty folded her arms with a patient expression of countenance.

"It appears, to me, very strange," said the magistrate, with as much gravity as he could assume, "that at the very time when the assault is clearly made out, this gentleman should deliberately turn round, and express a determination *not* to prosecute. I must say, his intention should have been made known to me before;

and then a great deal of unnecessary expenditure of public time would have been saved."

"It's very true, yer worship," said Katty. "Is my time come that I may spake? Thank yer honor—it's a shame to keep yer honor from the law, and the newspaper, and the bit of chat, for nothing. Ye see, Sir, if you plase, I can explain the whole to yer worship in no time."

"By no means," said Mr. Trufit, rising, "it is quite useless to trouble you on the subject—my friend here, Doctor Darling, has known the woman long—came prepared to give her a most excellent character—in fact, if I had heard all he had to say on the subject before I entered the court, I would not have troubled you at all."

"Your friend Darling was then unusually silent," observed the magistrate.

"The sore-throats are going everywhere," said Katty, dryly. "I hope the Doctor's not troubled with one."

"I assure you it is all a mistake," added Mr. Trufit.

While Mr. Trufit spoke, the Nurse looked at

him with an expression of sly humour which did not escape the observation of the physician, who was quite as much astonished at Mr. Trufit's change of proceedings as any one else could possibly be.

Katty curtsied, and said very respectfully, "That she thanked Doctor Darling from her heart, but she hoped she might state the plain case for the sake of her own character; it was only for *that* she wanted to spake; there was nothing, *barring* that, she cared for; but the lady had touched that, and she could not lie easy in her grave till she *had cleared it.*"

"Certainly," replied the magistrate; "you have heard, I believe, what has been said, but it is my duty to tell you not to state anything that would criminate yourself."

"No fear of that, yer honor," said the Nurse, proudly. "Where there's no criminality there's nothing to criminate; that's common sense, if it's not law; I have nothing to say but the bleased truth. Now as to character——"

"I entreat," said Mr. Trufit, much agitated, "that the case may be at once dismissed—we

do not wish—I do not desire to trouble you urther on the subject."

"Stay, my good Sir," replied the magistrate; "if the prisoner desires to reply, she may; persons, no matter who they are, have no right to trifle with the laws or the magistrates who administer them; the case has been made out against her; she must reply if she likes—you should have thought of this before you gave the woman into custody."

"I did not do so!" said Trufit.

"Your wife did, and that is the same thing in the eyes of the law, Sir; you are the same in the eyes of the law, Mr. Trufit."

"Now, good woman, what have you to say?" continued the magistrate, turning abruptly away, for he saw there was a mystery, and wished to solve it.

Trufit sat down in evident confusion, and concealed his face with his hand.

Katty was now at liberty to advance, and she did so with a free and fearless bearing, as if she was marching at the head of a regiment satisfied of victory. The people expected a scene,

and disposed themselves in various attitudes of attention. The pale, thin reporter saw the prospect of a harvest of many lines. The kindly face of the clerk was lit up in anticipation of amusement. The magistrate (only one was sitting) seemed determined to do his duty; and Doctor Darling's perplexity soldered his silence, which was seldom of long duration. Mr. Trufit withdrew his hand, and suffered his fingers to twitch and twirl his gold chain, bestowing unusual attention upon the formation of the links; and Katty, after the deepest of all deep curtsies, began.

"Sir, your honor's worship, to insense you into the rights of this business (with which I had little to do), I must go back to the month of November—next November will be eighteen years—and, by the same token, Doctor Darling *was* the darling then—so killing handsome, and not the ghost of a gray hair in his beautiful yellow *coolan*." Katty had gained one point; her audience laughed, and though it was at the Doctor's expense, he laughed too.

"My good woman," said the magistrate, terrified at the prospect of a long Irish story. "My good woman, pray do not think it necessary to go back; confine yourself to the charge against you."

"Thank yer honor, only I'm not partial to confinement, yer honor, and the story is very interesting—it's a fine lesson, Sir, of cruelty, and the ups and downs of fortune; and ye're against cruelty."

"I desire you to confine yourself to the matter in hand—what have you to say for yourself?"

"As Doctor Darling knows, I'm a poor, hardworking, painstaking woman, who sarved the king faithfully at home and abroad for fifteen years."

"Your husband did, you mean."

"Yer honor has just said they're all one."

"Will you confine yourself, as I said before, to your story?" said the magistrate, annoyed, yet amused, by Katty's quickness.

"I'm not partial to it at all, plaze yer honor, but I will—it's what I wish to clear myself of

is the wickedness which the lady *that keeps in the house* with that fine gentleman, with the new-fashioned whiskers——"

"My goodness!" exclaimed the magistrate, looking imploringly at the constable. "Will no one keep that woman in the right road?"

"I'm not out of it, Sir," said the ready-witted Katty, curtseying, "for I'm *forenint* yer honor! And if it's plasing to you, I want first and foremost to have the satisfaction of taking my bible-oath that I never had no call to the fine ould gentleman, Mr. Cavendish Jones—the heavens be hisbed this day, beyond sending him up, as the Doctor knows—(for many's the share he had of them, and much good might that do him)—the best of good dinners — soup and fish — remove — venison — turkey—curry—remove, and sortings of all kinds—jellies, and all confectionaries, without a taste of *pison* in them, and that's more than many can say; and if he was alive (which he is not), being as the priest said in his sarmint, *mortus est*—which, being a fine noble gentleman, larned in the law, and the prophets,

I am sure I need not English for your honor—he would take any oath to the same end to satisfy yer honor."

"This has nothing to do with the charge against you, my good woman," interrupted the magistrate, more amused than displeased at the display of the Nurse's eloquence, which to be justly appreciated should have been heard, and indeed the words were greatly benefited by the action which accompanied them. "Who are you talking of?" he inquired.

"That lady's husband, Sir; the cause of my troubling yer honor against my will, Sir, which I had no intention of doing, but for the good of my character, yer honor."

"She means Mrs. Cavendish Trufit's first husband," said Doctor Darling.

"Come to the point, my good woman, at once, you cannot expect me to wait for your explanation all day."

"I'm marching in double quick time, yer honor; only you cry 'halt' so often it puts out the line. No man, Sir, can have two living wives at the same time, Sir, can he, barring

he's a Turk?" And her keen eye glanced towards Mr. Trufit, while she added,—" I'm just at it now, my lord; I set out to keep'an assignation, as polite people say, with the Doctor; and from something he said I thought the woman, the lady, in Sloane Street wanted to see me—so I went on and on—my heart with the darlint, that has no friend but Katherine Macane, late of the 72nd; and oh then, Sir magistrate, have the laste taste in life of patience, for I'm within sight of the battery now.——And I looked down the airee, thinking of the gay ould times, whin the sun shined on me day and night, and from high and low, it was 'Good morning to you, Mistress Macane, and how is the babby?' And all of a suddent I got sight of her—a woman without heart, or soul, or ——, but oh, Sir, I wish you'd let me go back just for the last eighteen years?"

The magistrate waved his hand impatiently, and exclaimed, " My good woman, you are, without any exception, the most tiresome person I ever met with—proceed."

"Thank yer worship, a countermarch isn't pleasant, though we found it necessary some times; but I'll go on. I saw the lady, Sir, and I thought that she'd got a heart in her body at last, which after all she hadn't, Sir; and so afther tumbling over that dawshy boy, I told her a bit of my mind—just a foretaste of it; and she called me, what I've too much respect for yer honor's propriety to repate, and upbraided the memory of her first husband, which was a sin and a shame, for it behoulds a woman to support her husband's dignity—dead or alive—right or wrong—in the coffin or out of the coffin—as I once had the honour to say when the Duke was on the field."

"What has any duke to do with the matter?" groaned forth the wearied magistrate.

"I ask yer honor's pardon, but if you deny me the use of my tongue, how can I plade my cause; I'd put it to any lawyer on or off the binch, and see how he'd like to have his tongue spancilled."

"There, go on your own way," observed the

magistrate in utter despair, and pointing to the clock, he added: "I'll give you ten minutes, but if you have not done by that time——"

"Good luck to us!" exclaimed the Nurse, delighted at the prospect of so much time, "I'll be done before then."

And she recapitulated the entire proceeding, went into the weak evidence of the housemaid and the tiny boy, so as to shatter it to atoms and turn it into ridicule. And then drawing herself, up with the rude dignity of a Northern Indian, continued,—

"Now, Sir, yer worship, I want to take my oath of my freedom from the crime that bad woman charged me with; the rich, Sir, have their riches to carry them through the world, but I have nothing left but my character; and if you say I am ould and poor, and what call have I for one, why I'll make answer, that there is one in the world, who, though nothing to me in blood, is all in heart; and for her sake —not that, ould as I am, I'd give it up on my own account—but for her sake especially, that man must with his own hand put down upon

paper that he knows what was said of me was a bad and bitter lie, and he must get it signed for me in three hours by *the lady he calls his wife*, or—you'll do it, wont you?" she continued, turning full upon Mr. Trufit.

"This is very extraordinary altogether," observed the magistrate; "and I certainly recommend the parties to make it up amongst themselves; but this woman's eloquence——"

Again Katty interrupted the magistrate by a deep curtsey and an observation, "That all her seed, breed, and generation was always remarkable for turning their tongue to anything."

A fact which the magistrate did not in the least doubt—while he said, "It was an extraordinary circumstance that the prisoner should appear not only perfectly at her ease, but absolutely dictate *terms* to those who had come forward against her." His eye appealed to Doctor Darling, but Darling kept his large grey orbs fixed upon the clock—it was evident he would not even look a reply.

"I'm quite agreeable, Sir, to do whatever is pleasant to that fine gentleman as long as it's

what suits myself—but I have said my say, and if he doesn't like it, why he can do as he likes; and I'll tell your worship, or Doctor Darling, the reason I have for thinking that it's best *he* should let me have my own way anyhow."

But Mr. Trufit would not suffer her to tell her reasons. The Nurse appeared perfectly aware that the terms she had dictated would be complied with.

The magistrate told him, that if he acted strictly he ought to hold the prisoner to bail.

Katty replied, her "bail was to the fore," and pointed to Trufit, who having seized the nearest pen, and written what she desired, apologized for the trouble "the misunderstanding" had occasioned in Queen Square, and bowed his adieus. Doctor Darling waited to shake hands with the magistrate, and shrugged his shoulders, evidently more perplexed than he cared to admit at the entire proceeding. And Katty, waiting till the writing was dry, examined it with the eye of a critic.

"It's fine writin' enough, considering your

edication, and I'll just step down and wait at that unlucky house till it's signed properly, as it must be. It's little I thought the disgrace was so close to herself when I said the words I did on my bended knees." She then curtsied to the magistrate; "I'm thankful to yer worship; and though I pray God I may never have the pleasure to look at yer worship agin, I'd be glad how well you'd be, and how little you'd be bothered with troublesome people."

A wish which the magistrate cordially echoed.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A GLIMPSE OF SUNSHINE.

It astonished the humble dwellers in the tall, thin house at Bayswater, which seemed built for the purpose of accommodating the winds with a habitation of brick and mortar, when a carriage—it was too dark to perceive that it was only a hack, but still it *was* a carriage—drove up to the door, and Mrs. Macane stepping therefrom with the dignity of a queen, ordered the coachman to "turn round." She than ran up stairs followed by the landlady, into whose hand she put a sovereign, desiring her, in the frank and liberal voice which belongs to independence, "to pay herself." She next flung herself on her knees by the bed-side of the pale and shivering girl, whose fears at her nurse's prolonged absence had almost amounted to frenzy, and catching her to her bosom, tears, which would not relieve her bursting heart

during the day, gushed over the face of her beloved charge.

" It's turned, agra! it's turned—The cloud, jewel! *the silver lining* I so often tould ye of—ye can't see it yet, but I do, avourneen! This room's as bright as the park at the crownation of the Prince Ragent, and you're as bright as a princess, and Blucher, the baste, looks as knowing as a conjuror with glass eyes, and—— why you put on ye* yerself, and I out! Well here's a bran new whittle to wrap you in—and it's to a two-roomed lodging ye're going to, to-night, with a green Kidderminster covering the boords—and soft mild air to breathe—and I can't tell you all about it at once—only I've the use of such a purty kitchen. Murder, it's very late!—It was afther the conversation I had with the Doctor and somebody else, I took it; and such a tidy little hot hearth, and ——here, jewel, eat a bit;" and she emptied a packet of cakes on the bed where Marian had been lying.

* Dressed.

"I don't understand one word you have been saying, Nurse."

"Nor no need," continued Katty, "for you to understand anything, except that the goodness of the Almighty is above and around us all, and that we are wicked and wake to doubt it, and ought to remember, when we pray, how much we have to praise, and —— bad luck to that ould gridiron, it's always tripping me, out o' spite, I suppose, because I keep it rusty and idle so long. Blucher, you baste! keep yer head out of the thick of the biscuits; sure it wasn't for you I got those illigant ratafies, though they're raythur too brown in the baking. Lord, Miss Marian, dont let the cat pick the best of everything—he ought to have better manners."

But Marian was unable to attend either to her nurse or the cat. The sudden revulsion of feeling was too powerful for her mental and bodily weakness, and in the midst of Katty's eloquence she fainted on her arm. Poor Katty hardly knew how to manage—bitterly did she regret her own imprudence; but she managed to get her into the coach, and to her new

abode, and soon had the happiness of seeing her in a sound sleep, on a comfortable pillow.

When Marian awoke the next morning the sun was shining high and clear in a frosty sky; she perceived that the curtains of her bed were white and clean; that there was a small blind to the window—a small carpet on the floor—and in the looking-glass, that stood nearly opposite the bed, she perceived the figure of her faithful friend placing a small tea-pot of Britannia metal on the hob of a small, neat, old-fashioned grate. This was like a dream. The misery of the preceding days had vanished as by the stroke of a magician's wand, and was succeeded by comparative luxury, and positive comfort. The poor girl could hardly believe her senses, but kept her eyes fixed on the reflection in the glass, as if she had the power to retain it by the intensity of her gaze. "Nurse," she said, at last; and, in an instant nurse was by her side, with a thousand tender inquiries, mingled with congratulations and broken sentences of prayer, and delight at her having slept till one

o'clock, and questions as to how she liked the room, and exclamations of joy and reproaches at her own heedlessness for making her faint; and accounts of the extraordinary sagacity of Blucher, "the baste," who followed them down stairs, and sat "like a Christian" in the hackney—and was so charming — and assurances as to the goodness of the tea—and the freshness of the butter and the air, which was purer at "Ould Brompton" than any part of the globe, as it was called the "Mountpellier of England, and the favourite residence of Oliver Cromwell—and all who loved pace and quiet." All which appeared so strange and incomprehensible to poor Marian, that she began to doubt at the same moment the existence of her own senses and the sanity of her nurse. However she finished her breakfast; the window-blind was drawn up; and, peeping above what appeared to her a forest of trees, she saw the steeple of the pretty new church of Old Brompton. The sun was shining on the almost leafless branches; and suddenly the church-bell sounded, ringing (for it was the

Sabbath) the congregation out of church. It was long since Marian had felt the calm and holy influence of the most peaceful sound that can strike upon the ear. Katty understood the expression of her countenance, the meaning of the tears that sparkled in her eyes; and, without saying a word, went down to the people of the house, and borrowed a Bible, which she placed beneath the sick girl's pillow, and then kneeling down in a corner commenced telling over her own beads.

There certainly was abundant truth in Katty's commendation of Old Brompton, although her mingling Oliver Cromwell and peace and quietness together was very Irish. Of all the neighbourhoods in the vicinity of London, up to the present time, it has more than any retained the old air of the old gentility of the olden time: the trees are old: the houses standing far back from the little-frequented road, in their park-like lawns, are covered with red tiles; the windows are long and narrow, and the chimneys high; the detached cottages as picturesque and inconvenient

as can be imagined. Cromwell's old house, standing with its balconied roof at the termination of Cromwell Lane, seen from a distance, looks as grim as the ghost of an old covenanter; the rural public of the "Hoop and Toy," straggling backwards and forwards with its long chimneys and pointed gables, is as picturesque as any Italian hostlerie that Prout, the truest, and yet the most poetical, of living artists, ever painted. In summer the lanes leading to Kensington are green and white with hawthorn; and there is a pretty group of almshouses, bearing an ancient date, that would tell well in a picture. Then the air is so balmy and mild; the pure, soft air of the sunny south, within two miles of Piccadilly! The leaves so green—the flowers so fresh—all so smiling! People are only now beginning to talk of improving this quiet suburb: surveyors and architects have been seen in its fastnesses; and evil-disposed persons have disturbed the tranquillity of its inhabitants, by talking of converting a house and grounds, hitherto consecrated as the residence of Canning, into tea-

gardens! It is to be hoped they will be defeated in their intentions; and that one spot in the vicinity of London may remain uncontaminated by "improvement," and sacred to those whose delicate constitutions require fresh, mild air, and tranquillity. Katty had been directed by Doctor Darling to take Marian a lodging in this particular neighbourhood, because of its quietude—and holily and happily quiet did it seem to her wearied spirit. She fully appreciated her nurse's delicacy in providing for her the holy volume she trusted in.

When Katty had repeated a sufficient quantity of Paters and Aves to satisfy her conscience, she seated herself by Marian's side, if truth must be told, not a little dissatisfied at her young lady's total want of curiosity—a want she herself had never suffered from. But the change had been so great that it completely overwhelmed the power of inquiry in the foundling; and while she lay, and pondered over the wants of by-gone months, she positively needed the bodily energy which was necessary to ask a few simple questions.

"Is there nothing you'd like to know, Miss Marian, darlint, till it's time for you to take another sup of that beautiful broth, that was as stiff as calf's-foot jelly, 'till I put it into the saucepan? I got the mutton myself last night."

"Yes, Nurse, anything you tell me I shall be glad to hear."

"Don't you wonder, Miss Marian?"

"Very much indeed, Nurse—very much—it's all a dream to me—pray tell it me all, and I will go to sleep—I am so sleepy."

Katty put her fingers to her young lady's wrist, and when she numbered the low and tremulous motions of her pulse, she could no longer wonder at her inability to undergo the least exertion of body or mind. In a few minutes she was again asleep; and the only immediate relief Katty found for her over-boiling loquacity was being able to talk in an under tone to "Blucher, the baste," whose onee ye gleamed with ferocious brightness over a small plateful of meat, which he devoured with allthe rapidity that could be expected from a toothless cat.

Before the evening closed Doctor Darling

made his appearance, and Marian was effectually roused from her slumbers. He spoke, as was his wont, with gentleness and kindness; told her to keep up her spirits (for the moment she saw him she burst into tears), and had a long confab with Katty in the little sitting-room before his departure.

"You will tell me the meaning of all this strangeness to-morrow, dear Nurse, will you not?" inquired Marian, as Katty arranged her feather pillow—(what a change from a lumpy bolster of hard flock!)

"Why, darlint, I'd tell ye to-night, and it would be no trouble at all to me—if ye like," replied Katty.

"I think not to night," answered the languid girl—"Not to night—only say—is it real? that's all I care to know——"

"Ay, darlint, glory be to God!"

"And one thing more, Nurse—"

"I'll tell ye all I know, if you like," replied Katty, placing her elbows on her knees, as she invariably did, when going, as she said, to "tell a story *comfortably*."

"No, dear Nurse—I only want to ask one other question—will it last—last with peace and honour?"

"May the smiles of heaven ever rest on your sweet head!" said the Nurse, taking back a handful of the beautiful hair that shrouded her brow and cheek—"May the smiles of heaven ever rest on your sweet head for thinking of that same. It will last, I hope—I am sure it will last, mavourneen, and increase—contint ye, cora machree—it is all real—without fiend or fairy—it is all real—and it will last!"

"Thank God!" ejaculated Marian, clasping her hands. "Thank God! Say Amen, Nurse, for my poor head was growing weak, and wild, and altogether—I have not lately said thank God! as I have done now; but when *you* were away, and I was alone in the gloom—in the darkness in the night—I used to say God take me! God take me! But it is better, as poor Miss Kitty used to do, when Miss Womble tortured us both, to say, Thank God! and wait His pleasure: she was better than I am, poor

thing! Poor Miss Kitty, she said it for the the evil—evil that had tortured and would torture to the end of her days. I only said it for the good —now say Amen to my Thank God, Nurse!"

And a more fervent Amen never ascended to the throne of the Almighty, than that which burst from the lips of the poor untutored Irish-woman, as she knelt by the side of the deserted girl, for whom she would have sacrificed her life.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE PROSPECT BRIGHTENS.

*Letter from Major-General Sir Henry Peronett to his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Peronett, at Genoa.*

" Madam—dear Daughter-in-law,

" I WAS pleased to find by your last despatches from Genoa, brought by Lady Isabella Gascoigne, that you had not only outlived foreign climate and bad food, but were in the positive enjoyment of good health; I am, therefore, in expectation of your immediate return to England, and have given orders that my house in town be immediately prepared for your reception, Madam, in a style befitting the widow of my lamented son. You will find Henry much improved in personal appearance; indeed if he had somewhat more of the eye of the family—the *Peronett eye*—I doubt if there would be a

finer fellow of his age and height in the kingdom; but a young man of Henry's expectations ought to have a fixed and distinguished home in London—if he has not, the fact even of his being a Peronett will not preserve him from bad company.

"At my time of life I cannot be expected to forego the ease of a quiet retired home; yet, Madam, I would forego it if my grandson had no other relative to look to for the countenance which a well-regulated establishment gives. I am certain I need say no more on the subject. The enclosed cheque will enable you to travel as befits a member of my family.

"I am, Madam—dear Daughter-in-law,

"Yours,

"HENRY PERONETT."

When General Sir Henry Peronett had concluded this pompous summons for his daughter-in-law's return, he paused for a moment to consider if the Imperative Mood was weak or wanting in any part of the epistle, for if it was, he was *very certain* that Mrs. Peronett would, if possible, remain in Italy. He knew that, if any per-

son in existence ventured to dispute his will, she was that person; he therefore thought it best to add a postscript.

"I shall be most happy to allow a thousand or two a-year to meet the expense of your town residence; but, as these are not times when English money should be spent out of England, I find it my duty to add that I should hear of any return of your indisposition likely to keep you in Italy with regret, as it would be impossible for me to *continue* to increase your regular income while you remain abroad."

"That will act upon her," said the General, when he had perused his emphatic postscript, "that will act upon her like cold steel." Sir Henry was testy and bitter, when in contact with any one he disliked, and he did not particularly like his son's widow.

It is the greatest possible mistake to imagine that being of the same way of thinking, having the same pursuits, the same turn of mind, as it is called, makes people agree. Derogatory as it is to the dignity of human nature, experience forces the knowledge

that people having the same pursuits, the same foibles, the same feelings, agree least of all: one thunder-clap deadens the effect of another. A theatre, for instance, is nothing more than a hive, where every bee has a sting ready, not for an intruder, but for its fellow-bee. It is painful to know how actors of similar style and manner mar each other's points, and count the calls and claps which each receives above the other; but it would be invidious to quote this as an instance of discord arising where many are engaged in the pursuit of the same object, if the confession were not added that the same fault is observable in every sphere where men's tempers and feelings are called into operation. Higher and nobler minds overcome it altogether, simply because they *are* high and noble, and above the small artifices and weak emulations which gangrene and fester the heart; but though, thank Heaven, there is enough of this high and holy feeling left in England to "leaven the whole lump," there is also enough of petty jealousy and petty fraud to cause much sorrow to those who delight in

harmony. That "two of a trade can never agree," is not more true, than that two of a temper can never agree: thus, Sir Henry Peronett declared often and loudly, that "his daughter-in-law's pride was greater than Lucifer's;" and Mrs. Peronett exclaimed perpetually, that "Sir Henry's absurd pride was insupportable." Perhaps they were as man and woman the proudest that ever were born, and yet each made that the ground of complaint against the other. No one could for a moment look upon Mrs. Peronett's round and lofty forehead—her deep black eye, flashing from beneath its arched brow more in scorn than joy, her *petite* but defined nose, the almost imperceptable, yet expressive curl of her upper lip, the rounded chin, the lips full and well-formed, yet generally compressed—without feeling that the spirit of a tyrant gave fire to her eyes, and on the least contradiction sent the hottest blushes to her cheeks. Then her small but noble-looking head was proudly set upon a soft round throat, and when she walked she threw it back as one that would control the

world. She was tall, and of exceeding beauty; and yet, though men admired, they did not love, her: they liked her wit when it did not whip their faults or weaknesses too keenly. But she had arrived at the thirty-seventh year of her age, without having been tempted to change her name again. By her own sex she was either envied or disliked, generally both; and her acuteness having made her sensible of the fact, she made it an open and most foolish boast that *she* disliked all women. Thus, neither her wit, her beauty, nor her station, brought her friends; and at Genoa she would have been quite alone, but for the occasional presence of Lady Isabella Gascoigne. Her mind was far too pure to permit her to enter into the vices which are not esteemed vices by our neighbours of the South; and, wherever she appeared, either abroad or at home, she continued as companionless as a single and beautiful marble statue, upon which nothing warmer than moonlight had ever rested;—and yet this woman complained of the high and unbending pride of Sir Henry Peronett!

Many years had passed over the head of Lady Isabella Gascoigne since Marian's christening rendered the Irish nurse a subject of amusement to Lady Bab Hesketh; and yet Lady Isabella Gascoigne was even less changed than calm and gentle people usually are. You could have almost declared, when she was seated with her venerable brother, Lord Augustus Bingham, that she wore the self-same unobtrusive black satin gown which had led to the unsophisticated little Mr. Cooke's belief that "she was a nobody that did nothing." The Dean loved his sister more with the affection which a father feels for a child, than with that which a brother feels for a sister: she was nearly thirty years his junior; and as he was a widowed and childless man, he looked for her return from abroad as a blessing to his advanced years. Lady Bab's celebrity, and Lady Bab's blue stockings, were as perpetual blisters to her noble relative; it was not the reputation which adds dignity to rank, but the clever uncertain *bizarre* sort of celebrity that makes a woman talked of without being re-

spected. And when Lady Isabella was fairly seated, the morning after her return, in her brother's library by her brother's fire, the good man felt happier than he had done during her protracted absence.

"I feel something like my friend Sir Henry, Isabella," he said, "when I look round this room, replete with comforts which you cannot procure abroad."

"Nor do not want," put in his sister. "The climate does what your English fire-sides attempt to do."

"But, my dear, no climate can obliterate the duty which, as Englishmen, we owe to our native land, that of spending our money amongst those we derive it from; and doing all that lies within our means to uphold our station and character as natives of the finest country upon the face of the earth!"

"A right good English declaration," said Lady Isabella, smiling; "worthy the veriest John Bull of the olden time. You have not got rid of your prejudices, I find."

"I have not altered my opinions, nor have

*you* your dress. I think you used to curl your hair, and now it is Madonna'd; that is the only change I see in you, Isabella."

"Oh, my dear brother, there are changes in us all, which though the eye may not see the heart must feel. It is extraordinary how much older I feel during the last five years. Sad memories force themselves upon me, I can hardly tell how, or why; but the change which time writes upon every countenance, so little observed by those whom we meet day after day, is painful to witness when you have been long away—and, forgetful of the lapse of years, expect to see the same eyes—the same smiles; to hear the same voices—almost the same words. You are disappointed: the eyes are dimmed; the smiles seem stern and heavy; the voices have lost their buoyancy of tone; the welcomes are careless; you are either forgotten, or new people have created new interests."

"Not a bit of it," said the Dean. "I am full five-and-twenty years your senior, and yet I feel none of this. I have had my troubles too: the spire of that church shows as an everlasting

monument of buried hopes—wife and children rest beneath its shadow; but though affliction dimmed my eyes it did not *close my heart.* I know those who will not hazard a second affection, because a first has been taken from them—because they fear more trouble. This is cowardly and selfish. If our duties in life are reciprocal—if we do not come into the world simply for our own gratification—if one blessing is taken from us—we have no right to shut our eyes upon all others by which we are surrounded. Above all things, Isabella, we should beware of *closing our hearts.* Dear sister, let us all beware of *closing our hearts;* every generous emotion, every kindly feeling entering therein, should be hailed as a sun-beam coming from the Almighty to fructify, to cheer, whatever is good within us. The change we complain of in others, in nine cases out of ten is in ourselves; and it is expecting too much, I must say, if we hope that acquaintances, of whom we have seldom thought during a prolonged absence, should be as glad to see us as if we had remained at home and cultivated all

those little tendernesses which are to society what the heart is to the body."

Lady Isabella listened to the good Dean's homily, as a child listens to the instruction of a beloved parent. She remembered his ancient predilection for long speeches—his desire to soften all that was harsh, and strengthen all that was good; and though she felt most deeply when she looked at him, that he was more changed in appearance than she could have believed possible within the time, she also felt that the material part of her beloved brother's character was perfecting—that his *piety was practical, and his practice piety;* and, having so thought, she changed the subject—inquired how his schools got on?—when he had visited his old friends?—if he had succeeded to his full desire with his alms-houses? — entered into the minutia of his plans and projects for the benefit of his fellow-creatures; and, after sundry inquiries concerning all her old friends and acquaintances, and the probable reception her sister's new book would experi-

ence, she asked how Sir Henry Peronett and his grandson progressed.

Lord Augustus told her of the appearance and bearing of the youth, of his folly and of his generosity, and above all of the boyish love he had formed for a foundling girl; of the strange and strong attachment borne to her by a "half-mad old Irishwoman," as Peronett had described her to be, who had removed her he knew not where; and of his, the Dean's, own resolve to seek out, and if he found her worthy, to protect to the uttermost "the poor child"—as he gently called her—"of a wayward fortune."

A few moments' consideration convinced Lady Isabella that it was hardly possible the same incidents should have occurred to two children in the same street; and moreover what the Dean knew of Katty bore so strong a resemblance to the heroine of the christening, that Lady Isabella felt assured the child had, as she expected, been abandoned by the silly woman whose absurdities had made so strong an impression on her retentive memory. Everybody

knows that quiet, retiring people see and remember more than others. Lady Isabella's interest in the infant had not been destroyed, it had only slumbered; and she had regretted its destiny, when her second visit to Mrs. Trufit had been received with positive rudeness, entirely owing to the kindness she expressed towards the foundling.

"I remember my sister made notes of the nurse's appearance; her strange expressions; and the doings of the entire party that evening," said Lady Isabella, after she had communicated her belief to her brother as to her knowledge of the parties: "but my horror of everything tending to the violation of private society is such, that I invariably burnt what she used to call her valuable notes."

"And you did right, Isabella," said the Dean, warmly; "you did quite right. It is impossible for an author to mix in society—to have anything to do with the world—and not receive information and impressions of what is or is not in keeping with particular characters, part real, part imaginary—in fact, to be na-

tural, he must draw from the life; but the system of 'showing up," as it is called, individuals—exposing their faults—calling public attention to their peculiarities—satirizing their *ménage*, and repeating conversations uttered with the frankness and honesty and in the sacred sphere of private life,—cannot be too heartily condemned. A person guilty of such baseness ought to be hooted out of society as a moral assassin; and I have often told Barbara that, were she not my sister, I would long ago have held the obnoxious practice, of which I fear she is almost the originator, up to condemnation from the pulpit."

"My dear brother!"

"Yes, Isabel, I would. It is not because a vice is unpunishable that it should be pardonable. This is one that grows with what it feeds upon. Instead of literature being, as it should be, a high, a holy, and an honoured calling, people dread to let its professors enter their houses, and assemble round their hearths. They fear being exhibited; but if the exhibitors were soundly lashed for this offence

against the sacred laws of hospitality, and utterly banished, as they ought to be, from social converse; or, better still, if publishers would not disseminate scandal——"

"Stop, stop, my dearest brother," said the quiet Isabella, roused into a laugh at her brother's simple notions—"Stop, stop; the zeal of indignation has carried you far beyond our starting-post. You know Bab would eat your head to gain celebrity—to make people talk, in fact—she never cared for the means, so she obtained the end—and on that point, after much indolent forbearance on my part, we quarrelled. This new book of hers is to be the last: it has nothing to do with private scandal; it is only metaphysical, or political, or statistical, or one of the thousand-and-one things which some men-women succeed in rendering more 'palpably obscure' than they ever were before. But let us change the subject—I want to get back this poor girl: she must be found, brother."

"I have sent to a physician, a Doctor Darling, who, Henry told me, was interested about

her, to find her out: had I been well I would have gone myself."

"I will go!" said Lady Isabella, rising, with very unusual energy.

"Right, good girl!" observed Lord Augustus, kissing his sister's forehead as he used in her childish days, and forgetting, or rather not observing, that the braids he pushed back from the pensive brow were striped with grey. "Good girl! I will ring, and order the carriage." The carriage was ordered. "Isabella," continued the good man, who loved to hear himself talk, "I am sure you still think with me that any science calculated to withdraw women from those duties which, constituted as she is, form her happiness and the happiness of those around her, is injurious to the general well-being of society."

"Indeed I do."

"Would you then make her political?"

"No; if by political you mean a talker on politics: but I would make her patriotic—fit wife and mother to men ready to think and act right loyally and bravely."

"And godlily," added the Dean.

"And godlily," repeated Lady Isabel. "When called upon to act, I would have a woman wear a mind like polished steel, strong, yet not vaunting strength—feeling it so, and yet without a boast—well and brightly polished—for a coarse-minded woman is a harsh calumny on nature."

"It is," said the Dean. "It is the blackest calumny—it is downright falsehood. A coarse woman is a living insult to her sex. We will talk more of this hereafter. I think there can be little doubt but the girl is the same you remember so clearly; but will you really go?"

"Really? yes. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, you sometimes procrastinate!"

"Not, brother, in such a case as this; did I ever? for if I did, I was very wrong, indeed."

"I do not know, Isabel; I cannot say in such a case as this; because I am not aware that such a case ever came under my observation."

The Dean soon after handed his beloved

sister, with all the elaborate ceremony of the old school, into his carriage.

The physician, when she called upon him, declared himself totally ignorant of Katty's place of abode, but became immediately deeply interested in discovering it forthwith; and, fortunately for Marian and Lady Isabella's benevolent feelings, met the nurse at the very moment when her distress was deepest. It was Lady Isabella's generosity that enabled Katty to procure the lodging in the quaint and pleasant lanes of Old Brompton—where Marian enjoyed that sweet repose she had so long needed—and where it was hard to tell what her faithful attendant most rejoiced in, she had so many causes for gratulation and thankfulness.

Doctor Darling had been the willing agent of Lady Isabella's generosity; and it was indeed a blessing to poor Marian that it had not been longer delayed, for she must eventually have sunk under the pressure of disease and want; and not all poor Katty's efforts

could have saved her from an untimely grave. The physician drove on Sunday to Lord Augustus Bingham's residence, and detailed to Lady Isabella his odd meeting with the nurse—her adventure with Mrs. Trufit—the scene at the police-office—and concluded with the fact of the poor girl being removed, according to his belief, just in time to save her life.

"How very extraordinary," said Isabella, "that I should have been so unwillingly present at that heartless woman's exhibition so many years ago! I say unwillingly, because I remember how annoyed my sister was at the obstacles I raised to avoid going, while she anticipated so much amusement from the people she was likely to meet there; and stranger still was a presentiment that sorrow hovered over the poor infant. So strong was the feeling, that I remember following the nurse upstairs, and telling her if the child's prospects changed to let me know. Mrs. Cavendish Jones was my sister's whim for, I believe, a week; but I often thought of the

probable fate of that beautiful infant, with feelings of, to myself, unaccountable anxiety; and, strange as the tale is, I am really glad to find that, though you think she has been wilful, she has done nothing really wrong, and is followed by that very odd Irishwoman, who resisted my sister's entreaties to dance a jig, and pinched the child's foot till it cried, to cover her escape to the nursery."

Doctor Darling agreed with Lady Isabel, that everything she said was right. He praised Marian's abilities, for two reasons—first of all, because it was really pleasant to him to speak highly of those who deserved it; and, secondly, because it pleased the daughter of an earl—in *delicate health*—to hear her praised.

"It is strange," said the Dean, as the physician was about to depart—"It is strange; and, taken altogether, not so painful as some people might imagine, to look back through the vista of past years, and note the many romances of real life which we have all seen, if not partaken of. If every one, no matter how commonplace the routine of their existence,

were to write before they slept the events and feelings of each day, what an extraordinary journal would the record of threescore years and ten present!"

"It would be awful, my Lord!" said the Doctor.

"It would be awful, and painful, and pleasing, and useful, Sir," replied the Dean. "Useful, because it would show that, where the balance of evil preponderated, the cause thereof might be traced to ourselves—nay, Sir, I am sure of it; and when under the pressure of affliction, it would recall the many blessings which we are too apt to forget—it would also bring directly under our observation the progress of time towards eternity, exemplified in the changes which gradually and imperceptibly lead from the cradle to the grave."

The Doctor agreed with the Dean, though, if he had spoken the truth, he would have been glad the observation had not been made; for the old often delight in retrospections which, however they may interest the young, are any-

thing but pleasing to the middle-aged; and the physician (having arrived at that comfortable period of existence when men live with the present) did not look forward with anything like satisfaction to the time when he must creep into the

"Lean and slipper'd pantaloon."

"And now, my dear Isabel, having housed this poor child, who as yet knows not to whom she is indebted, have the goodness to tell me what you intend to do with her," said the Dean. "You do not," he continued, "take up things from whim, or for the sake of being talked of. It is most extraordinary that this girl should be the same who interested you so long ago; and as she is in safety, and, I suppose I may say, under your protection, I had better walk down to the Rosery, and tell my old friend the General the result of my inquiries."

"Do so," replied his sister. "I feel very much like a child about to possess a long-desired toy—I rejoice exceedingly at this event.

If you meet Henry Peronett, what will you say?"

"The truth!" answered the Dean. "It would be questioning his honour were I to attempt concealment; and I must confess I should be very doubtful of the right-mindedness of a man of my calling and age, who would attempt even an equivocation."

"But, brother, is the truth prudent at all times?"

"My dear sister, prudence holds a very secondary rank to truth. There is in my mind no middle course. I shall either tell Henry the truth, or tell him frankly that I will not trust him with the facts. I wish, old as I am, to be the young man's friend. I cannot, at my time of life, command his sympathies; but I can his respect. Do you think him like his father, Isabel?"

Lady Isabella Gascoigne had fully arrived at what might be called the autumn of her days—and yet a blush, not of a soft and gentle hue, but rushing and rapid, overspread her cheek: the good Dean did not see it, for he was

looking over his spectacles and out of the window to ascertain which of his poor pensioners (a widow with two little children clinging to her mourning) was curtseying so reverently as she passed.

And Lady Isabel had time to recover from her confusion before she replied that she could not see any likeness whatever.

"Like Mrs. Peronett, I suppose—I almost forget her, except, indeed, the haughty carriage and imperial step with which she used to tread the earth."

"Perhaps he is like his mother — who certainly does not deserve a child—yes—he is like her, but more I think in person than in face. If she comes over, as the General wishes," continued Lady Isabel, "the youth will have anything but the home his grandfather expects."

"She will be proud of Henry."

"I do not think so, brother—she has no love for him—and his habits seem I don't know what—so groom-like."

"The fashion, the fashion," repeated the

Dean, as the servant aired at the library fire his long black surtout, and then assisted him to put it on.

"Tell Sir Henry I will see the girl to-morrow."

"My dear Isabel, you have forgotten our good old friend—I shall find him and Hafiz at a tête-à-tête—in, perhaps, (as it is Sunday,) that extraordinary drawing-room, which looks as if some necromancer had furnished it by a wave of his magic-wand. When, after picking out a chair not occupied by some of his menagerie, I get fairly seated, and tell him the whole truth about your protegé, he will fly into a passion, at the bare idea of the possibility of Henry's meeting her again, and worry you and me to death with marches and counter-marches, and beliefs and disbeliefs. The good General exists as if he resided in an enemy's country — he has all the doubts of human virtue which men of the world acquire by a long connexion with the world; his feelings are right enough, but when they warm into the affections, he gets ashamed of their influence, and by some bold stroke, which he

considers a *coup de main*, he oversets them in the mire of mere worldliness, and throws me into a fever of displeasure, from which I do not recover until something occurs that wins my heart back to, I believe, my oldest living friend."

"If you were to die"—said Lady Isabel fondly, when her brother had finished his (as usual) rather prolonged observations — "I should have no friend."

"Your own fault, Bell, your own fault; you act in a different way, tending to the same end; shut yourself up in your own heart, and few can find you out there. We owe it as a duty to our fellow-creatures not to shut up our hearts. There's Mrs. Peronett—Pride has steeled her heart, and Indifference closes yours —those to whom you could be useful do not know your motives—they only know the results. I am grown a prosing old fellow, Bell; but somehow, as I feel the time approach when I must leave the flock I have watched over so long, I think I love them more and more. I do not find people black, and bitter, and heart-

less—there are black sheep to be sure in every flock—such, for instance, as that rascal whom I took from the Penitentiary, and who robbed my green-house! But if there are a few black sheep, Bell, there are plenty of white ones—plenty of white ones! See, Bell, there goes my favourite school! That is what you do not see in Italy," continued the good old man, his eyes filling with tears while he spoke. "This window is my delight—I can see from it without being seen, if I please; and the sight of those rosy, happy children, fed and clothed and educated according to my own plan, and by my means, always makes my heart swell within my old bosom, as if it could take the whole world unto itself. I feel"— and he grasped his gold-headed cane as he spoke—"so happy now that you are returned, to see the plans you used to laugh at triumphing—I feel so happy—so renewed—that—that——"

"You will establish another school?" added Lady Isabella, smiling, like Lady Grace, soberly.

"No, Bell, but I will astonish Mr. Lee, and preach next Sunday."

And away went one of those excellent priests, whose unostentatious, yet perfect religion, active benevolence, and pure simple-mindedness, rendered him as much respected as beloved—a rare distinction. As Lady Isabella, who in general thought better things than she said, had expressed it more than once, "His piety was practical, and his practice piety." Long after his departure his sister remained, her eyes fixed on the fire, her elbows resting on the arms of a *fauteuil*, into which she had sunk, pondering and conning over various things, past, present, and to come. Why she had gone abroad no one exactly knew. Lady Bab had worried her almost to death; the Dean's wife's sister had lived at the deanery ever since Lord Augustus's marriage; and it was not till death had removed her from the sphere of active benevolence pursued there, and in which she warmly engaged, that Lady Isabel felt herself really called upon to return to England and take care of her brother. She liked the *dolce far niente* of an Italian life—she loved cloudless skies—she delighted in music—and derived

intense pleasure from a perpetual intercourse with the finest works of art, whether of painting or sculpture—but she grew older, had perhaps grown a little tired of a continental life—she fancied everything was not as still as it used to be. A new class of persons were gaining admittance into society; the change which she perceived in others was stealing over herself; she thought a great deal about misspent time, and the constitutional indolence which she well knew had paralyzed her best exertions; and resolved at last to come to her brother's house, and avoiding as much as possible her sister's *clique*, rouse her dormant faculties, and make herself useful to the only being in the world she really loved. When she was very young the Dean was old, but now the difference was hardly felt—his feelings kept him young—hers added to her years. Lady Isabella's musing was interrupted by a visit from her sister.

"Well, Barbara," she exclaimed, "you are not changed!"

"I beg your pardon," said the old lady,

sinking into a chair, "but I think I am improved. Youthful beauty is the greatest of earthly mistakes, as I always tell Hesketh; besides, my hair, my eyes, my arm, my complexion are better than ever." Isabella would have said the latter is certainly *brighter*—but she checked herself, and only smiled. "And, then, I have so much more intellect in my countenance. Mind! Bell, mind! Since the establishment of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, it is extraordinary how much mind has made its way into people's faces."

"Indeed!" said Lady Isabel.

"Yes, indeed! and I have *raythe*r changed my politics; but don't tell Augustus for the world: of course he would be inclined naturally to follow my opinions; and they wouldn't do for him: a radical Dean would be a contradiction, and I love consistency. The cameos you sent me were quite loves—but you don't surely mean to fix yourself down here? I so much want to read you my proofs. Never was anything so new, so fresh, as this book. I

have written all the announcements myself, and sent the plot to the publisher: so he will anticipate it, you know, and all that sort of thing. Poor Hesketh, my dear, grows old and dosey, and falls asleep over my metaphysics. My novels take a higher tone than poor Sir Walter's: his were written to amuse, and (for I like to give every one just praise) improve the heart a little; but mine improve the head, and latterly are full of philosophy and disquisitions. Indeed there is one chapter which I have a great idea of reading myself (if they would let me) at the Royal Society: that would be new, would it not?"

"Very," said her sister.

"By the way, Bell, you will keep a carriage of your own?"

"Oh, no—I assure you the Dean's is very aristocratic; those blacks of his are magnificent."

"But *I* can never borrow his carriage, Bell; he uses it so constantly. Indeed, you had better stay the season at my *petit bijou*, as I call my house; and you shall have your own

*boudoir* fitted up in any way you like, with mirrors, and fountains, and things."

"In a house where the drawing-room is fourteen feet by twelve," observed her sister, quietly.

"*Fi donc!*" replied Lady Bab. "You ought to be more obliging, you must be aware how useful you could be to me; though, my poor child, I must confess, you do not wear as well as I do; yet, *à là Sultane*, you would look vastly well; and I want a party for Lady H.'s fancy ball—do be goodnatured to-morrow night! You can dress at my house, and we can all go in the Dean's carriage."

Lady Isabel shook her head.

"Then if you will not go yourself, lend me your ruby set; my jewels are *blazé partout*; and a woman like me, so much observed, can hardly wear the same things twice."

Lady Isabella lent her vain sister the jewels; and after a great deal more of the same sort of—it cannot be called conversation, for Lady Bab had it all to herself—a great deal of chatter, where old ideas were set forth as new

—new fashions declared old—and everything not tending to flatter her personal and literary reputation voted mean and worthless—Lady Bab Hesketh took her departure, a few moments before her brother's return—who heard from Lady Isabel, with great thankfulness at his escape, that their sister was a hundred times more absurd than ever.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE WELCOME VISITER.

"And now, my darlint, having explained to you that it is to a rale born gintlewoman you are behoulden for all this good—no other, you see, than her that saw you whin you war an innocent babe, the same as you are now, barring the babe—I'll trouble you to take this bate-up egg, just to keep up yer heart; for Doctor Darling as good as tould me Lady Isabella herself would be here to-day—and see, avourneen, how you look, the precious tears raining down yer face. Keep up, my corra! Sure it isn't trouble you should be in this blessed Monday of all the Mondays that ever opened with a sunbeam. My grief! stop crying, jewel! Oh, dear! all the curl is out of yer beautiful hair; it's hanging in a tangle about ye, so it is; and ye're so pale, my child. Well, only keep up—keep up—and the fine air, and the cooking—(for though you turned your nose

at that chicken-broth, it was fit to put before the King, God bless him! or the Duke himself)—and the goodness of that beautiful lady will soon set you up as you ought to be, and never war yet, but will be, as I always said you would."

And Katty Macane, for none other could so discourse, again adjusted the bed and the pillows, and hair and cap of her beloved, and then went round the room, and round the room, placing and displacing everything with the unsatisfied restlessness of a person in expectation of some great event.

"How do I look now, Nurse?" inquired Marian, when she had somewhat recovered her emotion, and her thoughts naturally reverted to the prevailing feeling—in young men and women, at all events. "How do I look, dear Nurse? if I look only as I feel, Lady Isabel will have no reason to think me ungrateful. I shall never forget her kind voice, and her affectionate looks, when Mrs. Trufit's unkindness——"

"Mrs. Trufit, indeed!" interrupted Katty.

"Mrs. Trufit! Oh, Miss Marian, it's no use, but I was very wicked, and had no right to curse that poor misfortunate woman, as I tould you I did, Miss; only my blood and bitterness were up, and I minded well the misery she had brought on you; and then the cruel hard thoughts she put on me, which you don't know, nor never will, plase God—why should you?"

"What were they, Nurse?"

"Sure, I've just tould you I won't tell you."

"Then, why say anything about them?"

"True, my dear, I ought not—it's very foolish of me—but somehow the heart will pour itself out in spite of the head, bad luck to it—it's ould and grey—and never had much stock, to say, of respectable responsible brains, which the world ought to be full of now, if we consider the great lot entirely of beautiful things that's coming up; only, my dear, there's a power of them new things, that they call new, ould. Well, as I was saying, my precious young lady—will you have a drop of broth, or bit of sponge-cake?"

"Nurse," said Marian, gravely, "I wish you would not call me young lady—it sounds, in my poor and perfectly-dependent state, as a reproach—a sneer—and that you would not give me——"

"Not call ye young lady!" exclaimed Katty, looking at her affectionately; "and what else would I call ye?"

"Call me Marian—your own Marian. Oh, Nurse, if God should ever make me rich, how I would delight to honour you!"

"God make you rich, or grand, I'd rayther say; for sure riches, though good, my darlint, very good, are to my mind, somehow, rayther vulgar—they've an impident way with them of poking their yellow nose everywhere. There's that Trufit, now; I wonder who would hould anything like acquaintance with him if it wasn't for his riches. Well, that poor woman; my heart aches for her, to see how the very thing she evened to me, she was herself, and is herself—and yet though she was it, and is it, didn't know it, nor doesn't; only she must, I suppose. Oh, then, it was beautiful to see how a single look of my eye, *with the truth*

*in it*, put Dick— I mean Mr.—Trufit! Well that bates—*Mr.* Trufit!" And Katty clapped her hands, and laughed, not loud, but so long, that Blucher, fancying, in his cattish sagacity, something must have occurred to excite such extraordinary prolongation of mirth, first looked round, then stretched out his paws, raised his back, yawned, walked across the room, elevated himself on his hind legs, put paws that were anything but velvet on Katty's lap, and looked with his one eye steadily and fixedly in the old face of his mistress.

"It's true for ye, cat O! I'd as soon expect to see you Drill Sargeant of the Guards, or Prime Minister of England, as to see Dick Delany—Richard Trufit, Esq.—the *True-fit* of a deceaver"—she added, laughing at her own bad pun—"though you don't know what that is, my darlint; God forbid you ever should."

"Nurse," said Marian, raising herself on her elbow while she spoke, and looking gravely at Katty; "what is the matter with you? I really can't make you out—you seem to have got a quantity of mystery, and information, and I hardly know what, in your head; and it

is absolutely oozing out at your fingers'-ends—when you can't talk to me you talk to that horrid cat. It is well that I had a good night's rest, and feel altogether another creature this morning, or you would drive me crazy."

"I beg your pardon, my precious; I won't say another word—will that do?—only, in regard of the cat, Miss, I'm sorry you should take an objection to him; for, to be sure, though he's not a beauty, he's a rock of sense. There, I'm dumb."

"Nurse, I want to hear—I have heard, and think I understand all about the Almighty's goodness, and the goodness of the friends he has raised up to me, and something, though not all, of the privations you have endured for my sake, and about your magistrate affair. But, Katty, I do not know the nature or the power of the spell you seem to possess over Mr. Trufit; and I will lie quite still while you tell me, and not speak a word till Lady Isabella comes."

"I wish I had anybody else in the wide world to tell it to," exclaimed Katty, in perfect

simplicity of heart and feeling; "for if I had I wouldn't trouble you with it; but somehow I must out with it, or my heart will burst! There's Doctor Darling, he'd be for hushing it up, because they're his patients; and if he was a 'turney he'd be for telling it out to make mischief, because that's what butters a 'turney's bread; and yet, after all, when you hear the rights of it from end to end, I'm thinking you'll be as good to give me advice as the best of them; because there's nothing bothers any one so much as the simple truth—sure that's what bothered him."

"Who, Nurse?"

"Who! why Dick Delany."

"And who is Dick Delany?"

"Miss Marian, I'll begin at the beginning, ye see."

"But who is Dick Delany?"

"Richard Trufit, Esq.," responded Katty, with mock solemnity.

"Go on," said Marian; "you take pleasure in mystifying me, I think."

"I'll not mystificate you at all, dear; only listen. There was, close to my mother's house—

and a fine house it was, with glazed windows, for she was the priest's niece—a purty little road, a *boreen* we used to call it—very purty and neat, and nice it was; but by the side of this boreen, convanient to the ditch where the gripe was filled up, just for all the world as you'd see a fairy mushroom big enough for all the good people, the fairees, dear, that neither you nor I believe in, to live under, or dine on, or take their pleasure round. Well, just like a big fairy mushroom there, over against the ditch, stood, or rather l'aned, the hedge-school of Murtogh Delany; and it's a proud woman his wife would be this blessed day, if she thought she had an esquire stuck to her grandson's name, by way of a tail; but she's dead—God rest her soul!—and so best, for in spite of the grandeur, the falsehood of the whiteheaded* boy of the family would break her heart. The house of Murtogh was no great things to look at, resting, as I said before, against the ditch, and only the two rooms in it, but Murtogh was a fine scholar, a larned man, and gave me

* Favourite.

the first insight I ever had into the rules of war, and tactics, and the like, which he used to read to me; and I a young woman grown almost, and his favourite pupil—my husband that was after—used to draw plans with a burnt stick upon the door, which he took ever and always off the one hinge it had a liking to, to sarve for a table; plans he used to draw with the burnt stick, of the siege of Troy, and Rome, and the marches of Constantine; all made as plain as print to the sight of my eyes (good-looking eyes they war then), and then relate, in the ancient tongue, the finest poetry about Hector and Ajax, and the Seven Champions of Christendom; and would dumbfounder father Hollagawn's coadjutor, who hadn't anything like the fine Latin—I mean the fine, big, wide-mouthed Latin of poor Murtogh—though he was only a hedge-schoolmaster, and taught more for the honour of Greek and Hebrew, than fee or reward; unless indeed it was a few sods of turf, or a kish of potatoes, or maybe once a year a slip of a pig—and could write 'pigrams, and salute

the Squire's lady in a poem, in aythur of the three dead languages she chose. And I mind (for she was a pleasant lady) she always answered him in French, which bothered Murtogh and me both at that time, though I pickt up the parley vous quick enough after. Well, poverty with a backbone as high and as bare as a Connaught pig's, bothered the heart and soul out of Murtogh; it never had any respect for larning nor for love: and what was worse than all, his daughter, his only child, came to a trouble, a bad trouble, through bad people; and when he heard it, it was asy to see the way it turned him; for he called the Latin boys to the Read-a-made-asy, and affronted his first *Gracian* by spaking to him in Irish. The boys knew that morning it was all up for a while with the master, and crept out of the school one by one, *not forgetting their manners at the door*, the same as if he was looking at them, for they had a grate respect for Murtogh Delany; and he never heeded it, but sat with an ancient book in his hand, and his eyes like grey marbles cold in his head, until

his wife, finding the boys all gone, came down out of the room, and throwing her arms round his neck, cried worse than if her child was in her coffin."

"What had she done?" inquired Marian.

"She left the place of her parents with a strange boy, who meant her no good."

"Nurse," persisted Marian earnestly, "you must be wrong: no *child*, no girl could leave her parents; think, Nurse, a girl to leave her mother, to cause her mother tears! I've heard that such has sometimes happened in the great heartless world; but amongst the poor, the very poor, their poverty would draw her closer to them; she would love them ten times more because of it; she would help them, comfort them, love them. No, Nurse, no; you think I do not know—or you have forgotten—there is no Nature in your story."

"Keep quiet, Miss Marian: you are like the little dove, avourneen, that had seen nothing in its young life but the snowiness of its own feathers, and asked its mother what she meant by calling a raven black. That night Mur-

togh's wife thought how curly, and brown, and beautiful was her husband's hair, like that of the *colleen* that had left them, falling in thousands over his brow and cheeks; and many were the salt tears she dropt on it that night, when he lay on his nate poor bed, and she watching by him; for though he never spoke, nor shed a tear, she saw the terrible agony of a father stiffening his face; he never rose from that bed for three weeks, and when he did, his hair was white as drifted snow."

"But his child, Nurse, his child?" inquired Marian.

"I'll tell you no more, Miss Marian, if you look that way," said Katty, quite unconscious of the pathos and power of her words. "His child never came back, though she tried to: she died on the road, and a good Christian she never set eyes on till the hour of her death walked her lone* twenty-two mile to bring the baby she left to its grandfather and grandmother. Well, Murtogh was come to himself

* Alone.

before that, and the school going on better than ever; but somehow he was crankier than he'd ever been before, and used to pandy and flog illigant, which I hould for boys to be both healthy and animating. Bless you, we never could have got on the time of the war without it; and so I am sure the Duke would say."

"For shame, Nurse."

"Well, any way, Murtogh found it answer, it made the boys so nimble, and when I'd look in (for after I gave up schooling I was as fond as ever of Murtogh and the school), well, I perceived that he couldn't abide poor little Dick, his grandson: and when I was a slip of a girl, nigh fifteen or upwards, maybe twenty, I used to take him on my knee, and tache him odds and ends of Latin, or a bit of Greek."

"You, Nurse!"

"Yes, dear; the fag ends of the words I pickt up, and then set Dick (he was always cute) to look up in his granddaddy's face, and out with the Latin, and that got into his heart at last; and whin I married, and left

the bit of a school, and the bohreen, and the fields, and strames, and mountains—och, well! Dick was a tight purty boy, five or six; a nate chap he was, with a fine taste for birds'-nesting, and apple-picking; and whin he could get nothing better than a pig to ride, why he'd make a horse of a pig in no time; and nothing could bate him at pitch and toss: and a ganius he had for music; whin only five years ould would turn a hemlock stem into a flute; and his face was handsome, but desperate cute. Well, I was wandering over the face of the earth, now dead, now alive, now following the regiment; now bombarding a town, killing the French, and carrying all before us, like real Trojans as we ever were, whin, my dear, who should stand before me with a letter of introduction from his father to Mrs. Sargent Katherine Macane, like a flash of lightning, but Dick Delany, a fine handsome bands-boy, for he was but a slip, well to look at; only, though there was nothing bad, there was nothing good in him, like a sweet blackberry. He was a proud chap, yet after that

clung wonderful to me, who was like a mother to him: he was a dare-devil too, though he didn't come out, till we war going home, and had no opportunity of distinguishing himself much, barring once, when (and he a slight, slight slip) he made a dash from the band, and saved an officer's life, for which he was rewarded, you may be sure. Well, I thought to be sure Dick would dash into something, only he got to have a cruel turn for cards. My poor man died, and I went on the pace establishment, without so much as a *split pay* itself, and I heard that Dick's grandmother died, poor thing, and Murtogh went off too, as ould people always do: and then I made inquiries about the boy, but nobody knew anything of him; he might have been fourteen or fifteen at the time we got home; indeed I can't spake accurate as to ages, I don't see the good of *black marking* time with the years of our life—we've all had enough of it by the time we go; only I found he had left the regiment; and what makes him a downright villain is—now listen to this, for it is

worth listening to—it's like a thing in a play, and will turn out a tragedy, I'm thinking, before we're quite done. I never saw Dick from the time abroad, but once, till I saw him, *and he saw me,* in the police-office. And when do you think that was—guess, Miss Marian—and you'll be shocked too, at the badness of mankind. No wonder he should turn like custard, or new crame, or sugar candy, on my hands at once, and lave off twirling his mousetatches. How astonished the magistrate was, though he didn't know the original rights of it; and the sweet face of Doctor Darling, how bothered it looked; and his fine moon-eyes, blue, sparkling with curosity; it was, and is—! but avourneen. *Where* do you think I saw Dick last, about five or six years ago; I've a rason for remembering the time, and he the deluder! Where was it, Miss Marian; and what was he doing?—— Oh, marcy! there's Lady Isabella's carriage, and her coachman and footman; and the arms on the carriage; and the milkman looking, and the first floors opposite out at the windows—

how very rude staring that way; did they never see a lady, a rale lady of title, get out of her carriage before? Well, let them look —who's ashamed! Ah, jewel, there's the pale blush of a young moss-rose just stealing on your cheek! My blessing! just look, my darlint, if there's a pin in the back of my handkerchief: and now, watch, avourneen, the curtsey I'll make to Lady Isabella Gascoigne, the daughter of a *rale* Earl."

And Katty did curtsey; and Katty talked, and recapitulated; and Mary wept; and Lady Isabella's imagination took wing, and she thought she had never, either at home or abroad, seen anything so surpassingly lovely as Marian; and before she left the cottage she made arrangements—the fruits of which will ripen in the next volume.

END OF VOL. II.

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# MARIAN;

OR,

# A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

By Mrs. S. C. HALL.

AUTHORESS OF "LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF IRISH LIFE,"
"UNCLE HORACE," &c. &c.

"Did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night:"—Milton.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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# CONTENTS OF VOLUME III.


## CHAPTER I.

PAGE

TWO LETTERS . . . . . 1

## CHAPTER II.

THE DAWN OF HOPE . . . . . 20

## CHAPTER III.

A NEW INTRODUCTION . . . . . 43

## CHAPTER IV.

MARIAN IN REPOSE . . . . . 67

## CHAPTER V.

A SHADOW OF COMING EVENTS . . . . . 99

## CHAPTER VI.

AN EPISODE, WHICH MAY BE PASSED OVER . . 120

## CHAPTER VII.

THE LONELY LOVER . . . . . 144

## CHAPTER VIII.

PAGE

A HINT AT A SECRET . . . . . 165

## CHAPTER IX.

A DYING BED . . . . . 184

## CHAPTER X.

A CLOUDY DAY CLEARING UP . . . . . 196

## CHAPTER XI.

THE HONEST SPY . . . . . 219

## CHAPTER XII.

LAST SCENE OF ALL. . . . . 256

# MARIAN;

OR,

## A YOUNG MAID'S FORTUNES.

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### CHAPTER I.

*From Lady Isabella Gascoigne to the Rev. Lord Augustus Bingham.*

"CONGRATULATE me, dearest brother, my hopes are more than realized! I would have returned last night, but I was enchained—spell-bound—by the beautiful girl who has impressed me with the reality of romance. How do I reproach myself for having so long neglected her!

"When, after a lapse of years, I revisited the woman who so cruelly treated and then deserted this poor Marian, I was so insulted by her, that I suffered my pride to overcome my better feelings, and did not repeat my visit—

indeed I went abroad again soon afterwards and lost sight of her altogether. I shall never forgive myself for this unwomanly conduct. I felt assured that Marian was miserable—I was drawn towards her by a powerful impulse—yet, because of the rudeness of an impertinent *parvenue* (a reason why I should have clung more closely to her), I neglected her altogether. Do not attempt to make excuses for me, dearest brother; I can make none for myself. I was anxious about the foundling's fate, but pride held me back, on one side, by recapitulating the insolence of that provoking woman; and indolence, my natural sin, on the other, by hints of the trouble that would arise from interfering in what was no concern of mine. I believe I am not the only one whose good intentions have been blighted in the bud by similar influences. What poor creatures we are! But I see how it is, that I, who have voyaged from land to land, surrounded by all the luxuries that wealth and station can afford, have been unhappy; while you, confined within what I may call the limits of your pro-

fession, and your own circle, and tried by many trials, have felt more pure happiness than I have ever known enjoyed by mortal. I see it, brother, clearly—I have nursed my own sorrows within my own bosom until they hardened and calcined my heart. I selected no one to whom to say 'I am sad!' I grew more and more proud, and shy, and nervous, and sensitive; the frivolity and gaiety of foreigners disturbed, without pleasing, me. The intimacy (I cannot wrong the holy word, and call it friendship) I formed with Mrs. Peronett strengthened this feeling: she delighted in admiration, and liked to be seen 'where men do congregate;' and my station, character, and silence, rendered me just the person she desired to be with abroad and at home. I fear me, many fashionable friendships have no more solid basis than *mutual convenience*. Brother, is it not strange how I have borne with that woman, merely because she had been *his* wife!—the mother of *his* child! The more I observed the cold indifference she manifested towards her son, the

more anxious was I to be with her, that I might gain a power over her which hereafter would contribute to the youth's happiness and well-doing in the world. *You,* of all, best know how long my affections lay buried in his father's grave!

"You have been far wiser than your poor Isabella; for you, my dear brother, chose the better part. I closed, or tried to close, my heart against all new affections—you *opened yours;* you sympathized and rejoiced with others; you did not put your good deeds out at compound interest, but were satisfied with such return as the gratitude or the frailties of human nature could afford. When I called your sphere confined, I spoke as one without knowledge; for to each within that sphere you were a parent, brother, friend, as their necessities required.

"I knew tens to your units, yet whom have I served? Even my clinging to that boy was selfish. I will improve, my dear Lord—I will indeed! I feel as if I could improve much now; and, ridding myself of my reserve, take this girl

at once unto my heart—make her the companion of my thoughts—tell her of my joys and sorrows. My old enemies whisper in my ears, that she is doubtless of low extraction (I don't believe it), and that I shall have much trouble (I believe the latter, but think I shall rouse me to meet it). Will not the exertion be beneficial to my health of mind and body? Do you frown *for once,* and say, 'That as your poor Isabella's hair grows gray, she grows romantic?' Alas, dear brother, when, stung by the coldness of one whom I loved more than life, I married the kind old General, who left me rich in everything but happiness; since then I have been cold and tame, locking romance within my bosom—but now it will have way. Do not chide me nor advise me; I am a true woman, and hate to be advised; I always feel disposed to rebel, even against your advice: it makes me think, and thought, to be sweet, ought to come laden with the memory of good deeds. I have made many good resolves, but, as to my deeds—*indeed* I cannot boast thereof.

"I hope Marian (if it were not Mrs. Peronett's name, I should call it the sweetest name in the whole world)—I hope Marian will not disappoint me: there is something lofty about her, that tells me she is upright, true, and truthful. How fast my pen runs, and how fast pens will run when we prate to those we love of what we love; when our feelings write each sentence, and we think not what we write, convinced that those who read will rejoice at what they see! I am sure you will be pleased with this girl—this young friend of mine; I do not like the word protégée, it does so smell of patronage—it is too constrained. I would have gone home last night, but that I wished to see her again this morning; and now I find so much to order and arrange, that I put it off till to-morrow.

"How disjointed this letter is!—and yet you will like it better than those I wrote from Venice (though I love Venice) or from Rome. Letters from abroad savour so much of guide-books, they are not as if from one's-self of one's-self; and everything being already known

takes off all the freshness. What I have got to tell is quite fresh—one of the heart's *chronicles*.—'Heart's chronicles!' That is too like our sister; but if you are not interested in this girl, the fault is mine—not yours.

"The Irish nurse, whom you have heard of, as following the fortunes of her young mistress whichever way they tended, received me with a curtsey fit for a royal birth-day, so deep and dignified. Poor Marian would have sunk at my feet, but she assisted her to rise; the effort was almost too much; I shall never forget the bright, but evanescent flush upon her cheek, the gentle tremor of her voice, the lustre of her eyes, nor the beauty of her hair, wreathing her slender throat, and shrouding her figure—I never saw such perfect loveliness before; I can fancy it lit up, if offended or insulted, by stronger lights than an uninterested observer would imagine such a face capable of expressing. You see—a woman can praise another's beauty warmly; perhaps *you* will add, when all fear of rivalry is past. I wish you could have heard the mingled affection and shrewdness

which the nurse displayed in her address to me — for Marian hardly spoke, but sat, her splendid eyes fixed upon me; her countenance expressing almost painfully every variation of those feelings which her nurse's story excited. The old woman—(she was singularly handsome, I remember, about sixteen years ago—the ripe, rich beauty of Autumn, whose tints you admire, though you know they are death-stricken)—the old woman began at the beginning—told me how the 'darlint' was found—how she manœuvred to get her to take the place, in Mrs. Cavendish Jones's heart, of a discarded macaw—how the first years of the child's life were passed in luxury—how the lady's humour changed — and, after sundry trials, which Katty Macane and her nursling found hard to bear—how she was sent to one of those hot-beds of evil, a half-caste boarding-school—how, little by little, her education and small comforts were curtailed together; and after the death of Mr. Cavendish Jones, how that girl—whose beauty will one day astonish, even in this land of beauty, those who look upon it—

became the fag of the school, compelled to slave for all whose parents or friends paid a few more shillings per quarter than was doled by her *parvenue* patroness, who all the time arrogated to herself the most wonderful goodness! Oh, the self-righteousness of this sinful world!

"When the nurse described, with all the untaught vigour of natural eloquence, the tortures Marian suffered both abroad and at home, hot blushes rose to the maiden's cheeks, and were watered by tears, proud tears, standing like the heavy rain-drops of a fervid summer noon upon the bosom of a rose—they were as large as beautiful—distilling in round full drops from her half-closed eyes; and then her generous nature burst forth in a few words, her soul overflowing with gratitude to the woman who cared for and watched over her—the woman who, having nothing to live by but the labour of her hands, devoted that with her whole heart and soul to the necessities of the foundling,—while I, struck as I had been by the infant, and the circumstances under which she was placed, could, by appropriating a tithe

of my quiet extravagances, have saved her from misery worse than what is endured by a galley-slave.

"Oh, my dear brother! the thoughtless rich have a world of crime to answer for; crimes that never would have been committed but for their engrossing selfishness, which refuses the small aid that would preserve—ay, countless souls from sin. The nurse well remembered me, and showed me a card I gave her the night that Marian was christened. She had often tried to find me out, 'Seeing,' as she said, 'that her jewel's heart and soul were worn out of her, and no help for it;—but what good is it,' she added, 'to the poor and the suffering when they find those whose protection they depended upon are in a foreign land?'

"Mrs. Cavendish Jones, it seems, thought fit to marry again, and her husband was as kind to the foundling at first as his rough nature would allow—took her from school, and finding her useful, treated her in proportion to that ability—and then, of course, the old wife and the young husband quarrelled—he filled

his house with the wild, if not the wicked—you know the rest. Henry Peronett's story was true—Marian, insulted and abused, unable longer to support insults which the low-minded heap upon dependents, flew to her nurse for protection—a long illness followed, prolonged, I fear, by positive want; and I cannot avoid calling upon you, dearest brother, to observe the elevated character of this uneducated woman, who was so fearful that the shadow of suspicion should rest upon her beloved charge, that she would not suffer Henry Peronett to know where she had been removed to.

"I do not think the young girl loves the boy. I watched her closely. She spoke of him with a frank gratitude, not at all akin to love. There was no blushing, no faltering. She said that, of all the reckless visitors in Sloane Street, Henry Peronett alone had treated her with delicacy and respect—that she never could forget his attention, though it had been the cause to her of so much additional suffering.

"There is a marvellous part of the Irish-woman's story yet to be told. She got into a quarrel, or something of the sort, with the *çi-devant* Mrs. Cavendish Jones, and saw, it would appear, not for the first time, Mr. Trufit, who, she avers, is not Mr. Trufit at all, but a Dick or Larry something, an Irishman, the son of an Irish hedge-schoolmaster, who served in the same regiment with her husband, and who, by dint of a great deal of brassy cleverness, has got what is falsely termed 'on' in the world; that is to say, instead of gambling with farthings, he gambles with pounds. But the atrocious part of the business is, that he was married to a young woman of his own country, under his real name, and has taken in this unfortunate, weak-headed woman—his young Irish wife being at this moment alive!

"You see I have heard the entire history, and fear my recapitulation has been tedious. But I must tell you of a point in Marian's character which gave me great pleasure. Katty Macane was exulting over the speedy revenge which fell upon Mrs. Cavendish Jones.

'When she was taking away that young craythur's character and mine,' she said, 'she little thought how ready the thunderbolt was to fall upon herself—it will fall, and, thank God, I know it.'

"'No, no, Nurse!' interrupted the poor maiden; 'if, under this affliction, I could be a comfort or an aid to her, I would serve her, when she is in trouble, on my knees. We have no right to inquire why we are served, dear Nurse; enough for us that we are served. Hardly as I have been treated, I might have been destined to a workhouse but for her; and you, too, have eaten of her bread.'

"Was not that right? We know it was. Katty muttered something about 'bitter bread:' the girl would hear no more, but seemed anxious that Mrs. Jones should be freed from his tyranny; for it seems he has used her barbarously of late. I am, nevertheless, in a strait—what am I to do with this girl? She is too old, too womanly, for school. She spoke to me this morning about getting better, and being a governess. I told her she should be

my friend, and then she wept; but replied she felt assured she had talent enough to be independent, which was the first wish of her heart; the nurse standing behind her all the time, as if she were a duchess. I will not, I assure you, 'run away with my passion;' but if she does not turn out something different from the usual throng of young ladies, I have no perceptions. Still, what am I to do with her?

"Katty has offered her services as cook wherever Marian may be domiciled, for the double purpose (if I understand rightly) of 'keeping the good family from being pisoned by London-made dishes, and taking care of Miss Marian.' I want to keep this Maid Marian beneath my own roof, that I may understand her thoroughly. She will be something for me to dwell upon, to decipher, and to love. I will delight in her, fancy her my child! that is, if she be what I suppose—she must be so, dear brother!

"If I bring her to the deanery, old General Peronett will become ten times more restless

than ever, and fancy his grandson will be run away with; and were Henry to be there, I do not think it would be quite prudent: yet I am sure she will never love him. Those who have suffered know the symptoms of the fever well. She is not infected. I think I can manage the old General, and Henry is going back to Oxford immediately.

"I have just seen Godfrey Peronett, who takes a right excellent interest in what concerns his young cousin, whom he loves, and would, if he could, protect from all evil. I esteem him much for this truly disinterested generosity; for, as you know, had not Mrs Peronett's child been a boy, the vast family-estates would, at the General's death, have been his.

"He was more admired at Florence than any other Englishman; and though I cannot, in the language of a fashionable novelist, declare 'that, though of angelic beauty and surpassing refinement, he was perfectly unconscious of his fascinations,' yet it is only justice to Godfrey Peronett to state that he never dis-

graced himself by affectation or presumption. His aunt seemed to regard him with an unconquerable hatred; why, I never could understand, unless, indeed, it be, that after Henry he is next heir to the baronetage—people concerned therein always hate 'next heirs.' He is going to spend a month with Sir Henry; a sort of duty-visit, which he tells me he performs every summer.

"When Henry is really gone to Oxford, say, may I not bring Marion to the deanery? I pledge myself, if you do not think her exactly what I describe, I will find her some safe asylum. I know that you will think—your generous temper will prevent your saying so at first—but I know that you will think this girl has been brought up in that sort of half-caste society which gives a bad tone to both mind and manners. Had I not seen and conversed with her, I should say so too. Oh, my dear brother! a hyacinth may be confounded with a common bulb; but it will conquer calumny by blossoming forth a hyacinth. However I shall see you to-morrow. The

groom will wait to bring me word how you are. I would ask you to forgive this longest of long letters, did I not feel that you will be as happy to read as I have been to write it.

"Ever and ever, dearest Augustus,

"Your grateful friend, and

"Affectionate Sister,

"ISABEL."

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*The Very Rev. Lord Augustus Bingham, to Lady Isabella Gascoigne.*

"My dearest Sister,

"An impulse, tending to serve a fellow-creature, even though liable to the charge of romance, may be safely followed—it may be useful to two persons; it must benefit one. Every generous impulse we feel is a proof that the divinity still stirs within us: consequently it does the person who feels it good; and if it serves another, are not two served thereby? Charity softens and fertilizes the heart, as the dews of heaven soften and fertilize the earth. Bring this poor girl to my house immediately. If she is what you describe, shall we not find

much pleasure in her? If she is not, we will try to make her so. A plant of even small promise can be brought to perfection by timely culture.

"Henry Peronett goes to Oxford to-morrow, with a new tutor, recommended by Godfrey. I did think not to tell the General that Marian was coming here—but why? You have a right to protect whom you please; and he declares that the nurse must be an 'original;' quite enough to recommend her, at all events, to his favour. Bring both; my cook has been long talking of retiring on her pension, granted in consideration of her services for thirty years. Indeed, during the last five, she has spoiled every dish almost that came to table. I could not hurt her feelings by telling her so, as, poor thing, she did not intend it. Perhaps this Katty woman could take her place. I think it would be as well not to tell Barbara of the circumstances you have detailed. She would be for putting them into a book directly, and we could not prevent it. It would injure the poor girl's prospects in life, and, what would be as bad, hurt her feelings.

"May the Almighty watch over, direct, and guide you, my dearest sister! I cannot help fancying you still the buoyant, rosy child our beloved mother placed in my arms, while her spirit was yearning towards both earth and heaven! I have lived so long, dear Isabel, that I have almost taught myself to think my home must be where so many whom I loved are gone before me. I miss them here; and then I think they will greet me in another land; and I, in my own happy turn, will greet those I may leave behind. Despite my trials, I have found this a pleasant world—what, then, must be the next, where all good things are perfected? I prate on paper to my dear sister: will she forgive the continued garrulity of an old pastor, who forgets his earthly rank from so frequently contemplating the dignity conferred on him by his Divine Master? But I must not write a homily, particularly as I really intend to preach next Sunday.

"Yours, my dearest Bell,

"Augustus Bingham.

"P.S.—I long for your return."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DAWN OF HOPE.

Lady Isabella Gascoigne was seated opposite to Marian Winter in her lodging at Old Brompton; and Doctor Darling, after having told the beatings of the pale girl's pulse, and kept his sharp grey eye fixed upon the huge gold repeater, that might have been beaten out into half a dozen modern watches, pronounced it as his opinion that the invalid might undertake the journey to the deanery with perfect safety: adding, that the change of air would do her good.

"My lady, she's not the same thing at all," said Katty; "she's not all as one as herself, only another far better, Doctor Darling, dear, which it would be hard to find for all that. Only on account of the surprise, and the joy, and the crying all night, to the disturbance of the cat, who has broke one of the ornaments on the chimney by the manes of it."

Doctor Darling took his leave, promising to drive to Twickenham next day.

"He'll not forget that *now*," murmured Katty to herself, as she stood curtseying at the door, and she laid particular emphasis on the word *now*. "And yet it's hard to blame him," she continued, "for he's greatly bothered, and has a beautiful heart, for all that. It's not a great deal them fashionable doctors would have to do, but for the little divartin' whims of the quality; and they don't care a great deal about the meaning of a doctor's words, as long as they sound purty; he ought to be nothing from top to toe but a bottle of syrup of violets to plase them—aromatic vinegar would be too strong: and then, when he sees the sort of blarney that goes down with one, why he thinks it will go down with another, and may be," concluded Katty, "he's not far out, for I feel all the sprightlier since he tould me I was looking young and handsome!"

The nurse returned to the drawing-room, and, with a particularly low curtsey, "Made

bould to ask her ladyship what she was to do in regard of the cat?"

"Perhaps," said Lady Isabella, "you had better leave it to board and lodge with your old acquaintance Paddy Charley, of whom I have heard so much."

"Thank ye, my lady; but he never takes kindly to his milk unless I give it him."

"There are so many dogs at the deanery, that a strange cat would certainly be killed."

"He never makes himself strange my lady, if you plaze," replied Katty with all humility.

"And the other cats would fight him," continued Lady Isabel.

"Oh! sure they'd pathern their betters, my lady, and be kind to the stranger!" said Katty, extracting a compliment from her cat.

"Indeed, Nurse, he looks very shabby."

"My lady, it's moulting he is," persisted Katty respectfully; "he's a born beauty when he's fat, and sonsy, and got his new coat."

"Well, pack him up in something; but mind, I don't answer for his life."

"Many thanks to you, my lady; I'm sure it never came into my head to think your ladyship would answer for any such thing! I know his station better, and so does the baste, if he'd the tongue to tell it."—("Mew! mew!" exclaimed Blucher, his eyes fixed upon a small basket of confectionery Lady Isabella had brought her *protégée*.)—"Think of his sinse, my lady!" exclaimed the delighted nurse—"Now, Miss Marian would not believe that if she had not heard it."

Lady Isabella, having ascertained that everything was prepared for their departure, informed Katty that one of her servants would call for her in an hour, and that Marian should go with her to Twickenham.

"And, my lady, Miss Marian's things, and my bit of a box?"

"The servant will take charge of all."

"May the Almighty heap blessings on you till the day of your death, and afther!" exclaimed the nurse, with tearful eyes, as Marian, trembling with emotion, rose to follow her friend.

Lady Isabella's foot knocked against a small deal case that rested against the wall.

"The only time I ever knew the Duke in a lady's way. Are you hurt, my lady?"

"What Duke?" inquired Lady Isabel, without heeding Katty's question.

"Of Wellington, God bless him," answered the nurse, curtseying.

"Shew it me," said the lady.

Katty opened the case, and there was the picture of the Duke, which she had that morning redeemed from its vile durance, and a gauntlet and officer's plume; the same that always hung over the picture in Katty's room.

"These are relics, I suppose?" said Lady Isabella, not uninterested in such mementoes, in the possession of a person in Katty's humble sphere of life.

"They are, my lady. That plume belonged to one of the most noble officers who ever had the glory to serve under the greatest commander England or the world ever produced; as I have always felt and said before the

French, and behind the French; and, as they know, in the face of the whole universe—a wonderful General intirely. If I could only see his shadow once more it would put fresh life in me, which I hardly want now, thank ye, my lady."

"Indeed!" said Lady Isabel.

"And true, my lady, if he was to the fore now, I should not have wanted anything the earth could give me. I'd as soon part with my life as with those feathers," she added, "and the glove—all that's left of him now in the world—to me any way——!" And fresh tears filled her eyes. "He was my husband's master for many a day. And once, when I had the fever, and every soul left me, or as good, it was yourself, Captain Henry Halliday, that——"

"Who did you say?" inquired Lady Isabella, and every trace of colour faded from her cheek. "Who did you say?" she repeated.

"Captain Henry Halliday," my lady, replied the nurse, without observing her emotion; for her eyes had been fixed on the

battered plume. "Maybe yer honourable ladyship knew him? Sure, you ought to have known him any way, for his heart was like your own, both soft and generous: didn't he tend me in the fever, coming, his own dear self, to hand me a drink, and the regiment camping out?—heaven be his bed, I pray God! Oh dear; he returned, by the manes of a dirty French bullet, that made its way into him, to England, and was promoted; and his father had great riches intirely by taking another name (his mother's name it was), which I never troubled about, for the increased grandeur was but a fine funeral-pall—he married—and died!"

"And you never inquired after his family?" said Lady Isabella, grasping the plume with her taper fingers, almost unconscious of what she did.

"Lord, no, my lady! Who would ask for the *body* after the *heart* was out of it? But you're not well, my dear lady—Miss Marian! Lady Isabella is not well, Miss Marian!"

"The room is close," said Lady Isabella,

faintly dropping the plume into its box; "the room is very close, but I shall be better by-and-by. Let us go."

Katty Macane saw her nursling ascend the steps of the carriage of a "born noblewoman," with a great deal of delight; her heart was so overcharged with joy that her first impulse, when she returned to the now deserted room, was to fall on her knees, and, covering her face with her hands, sob forth her earnest gratitude to Almighty God, without bestowing a thought more on the little crowd, whose astonishment at so fine a carriage in so small a place was great indeed. She was quickly recalled to a consciousness of what was passing around her by a tap at the door, and the unexpected entrance of the *ci-devant* bandsboy, who has hitherto figured as Mr. Trufit. He advanced in all his glowing finery into the room, and extending his jewelled hand to the Sergeant's widow, greeted her as his "dear old friend."

"Thank ye, sir," she replied, thrusting both her hands into her capacious pockets—

"Thank ye for nothing,—I don't like yer goings on, Larry—and I can fancy your grey-headed grandfather starting from the green sod that covers his grave, and cursing you, where you stand, with the heavy curse of an honest man, for a bad, unprincipled vagabond, as you are; and the sooner ye take yerself out of my place the better plased will I be, for I had always a dacent, upright spirit. I'm sure if I thought it was you was in it, I'd have begged bread for Miss Marian from door to door, before I'd have let her stay under the one roof with you for a minute, let alone an hour."

During this uncomplimentary address, Mr. Trufit stood with a patient and penitent expression of countenance before the enraged nurse: he looked as if he had anticipated his reception, and was quite prepared to meet it.

"Will you listen to reason, my dear Mrs. Macane?" he said at last, when the storm was in some degree blown over.

"I tell you what, the profligate have no reason on their side,—the only reason they can ever have is a false one. And now that I've

time to look at you, I'm sure you're a purty boy to set up for a gentleman: and the innocent craythur of a girl, you really married before my own two eyes, labouring in a far off place to support your child with the labour of her hands. Oh you born in iniquity!—And to see the face of you, the red, bloated face you've got with wine and wickedness, instead of the healthful handsome one that met the mountain breeze of your own country—I'm ashamed of your being in the same room with me."

"I tell you, woman!" he exclaimed, "I was wrought up to it—I was done up—cleaned out!"

"Cleaned out!" repeated Katty, while the most biting and bitter contempt changed the expression of her countenance. "A dirty job they must have had, particularly if they took out your heart into the bargain."

"I hadn't a farthing, and the woman made love to me first, or I'd never have thought of marrying my grandmother. I had neither money nor credit: what could I do?"

"Break stones on the highway!" replied Katty indignantly. "Success and honour, I say," she added, "to those who by uprightness and bravery of one kind or other are born again, as a body may say, to greatness and grandeur—but those who *creep up the back-stairs of the world*, to get at the best places—my heavy hatred and scorn on them all, if I lived on potatoes and buttermilk to the day of my death! Besides, it's a lie—you laid a trap for her, that you did—I know it all now."

"There is no use whatever in venting this abuse on me, Mrs. Macane. I came here as an old friend, to see if I could be of any service to you, and to tell you that it would be better for us both to keep this little matter quiet."

"I am a poor lone woman, as I've had occasion to say and think often enough," replied Katty—"a poor lone woman, and you are, in your own opinion, a fine dandified chap, who thinks it an honour to notice me; but I scorn your offer of friendship—and as to the

keeping quiet, I should be long sorry to hush up a crime like yours: bad as Mrs. Jones has used us, that's no reason she should go on living in sin and misery; for you've been a tyrant to her, bitter and hard."

"You will think again of this," said Trufit, with an impudent swagger; "you will think better of it. Why, what good could you do yourself by peaching?—just think, I say, and look here."

He drew a well-filled purse from his pocket, and held it before her.

"I do look," said Katty, and her language and sentiments rose with her indignation, "and I see the fruits of a scandalous fraud. To think the hand, that in its infancy plucked the mountain flowers of my own dear country, should now dare to show an honest woman the like of that! Whose money did you win last night? or by what mean course did you draw that purse—full from the foolish, broken-hearted woman you have wronged?"

"Don't be a fool, Mrs. Macane. I've seen you sharp enough after money before now.

Take this, and hold your tongue—if you promise, I know you will keep your word."

"That's more than any one could say of you, I believe," replied the merciless Katty—"and as to being sharp afther money, to be sure I am—I'm not such a born fool as not to know the good of it, and the power of it; nor such a born fool as not to know the curse of it, if it is got unjustly. Put it up, Larry, and go your ways; I'll have nothing to do with you nor it."

"Maybe yes, and maybe no," replied the scapegrace, dangling the crimson network between his finger and thumb. "Maybe yes, and maybe no. You're not quite a free agent in this matter."

"Amongst your beautiful acquaintances, I dare say you've got some mighty fine lawyer's pen-wiper, who tells you such spick-and-span law words. Free agent, indeed! I've no husband living, God be praised! to come in the way of my will—humph!"

"But, Mrs. Macane—Marian! How can you stop my tongue if I say that she is——"

He paused, afraid to continue his sentence, for more than the brilliancy of youth had returned to Katty's eyes.

"That she is what, young man?"

"Why, really—I believe in reality—that is—in downright—positive certainty—I believe there is nothing absolutely bad about the girl."

"Well, go on, my fine fellow."

"Nothing to say wrong; but appearances are so very perplexing."

"So they are: more than one body has mistaken you for a gentleman!"

"So strange, altogether, that you perceive I have it in my power to ruin that girl's character! Now, don't fire so; I did not say I was going to do it; but I do say I have it in my power to ruin that girl's character for ever."

"Oh, you have!" exclaimed Katty, bitterly, trying to keep down her passion.

"I have; but I have no desire to do so—not in the least, I assure you. I will hold my tongue, if you will hold your tongue."

"I thank you, Sir, for your information

—mutual accommodation, the bill-drawers, your black-a-viced men in the Minories, call it. You see, I know that, any way."

Katty walked deliberately to the window, and threw it up.

"Look out there, Mr. Larry; do you see them two policemen out there? Well, then, as sure as your name is *not* what you call it —Trufit—so sure will I at this precious moment call them here, and just turn you over to them as a what-d'ye-call it—a poly-bigamist—and it's yer own true wife will be in town in less time than you look for."

There was a fixed determination in Katty's manner which startled the swindler. Plain, straightforward truth confuses the most fertile inventions of the cunning; and before he had time to utter a word, Katty called out,—

"You, Paddy Charley's son; you know me, young Mr. Paddy Policeman! Come and stand under this windy, if you plase, just for a minute."

In an instant Trufit was at her side.

"Don't dare to lay a finger upon me," she

exclaimed. "You base black-hearted fellow, if you had gone bould and honest upon the high-way, and cried stand, like a man—if you had done this through want—mind, I say through want—I'd have forgiven you; yes, and if it was to trouble you came in consequence of it, I'd be first to put the police *off*, not *on*, you,—that I would; but to schame, as you have done, and then to dare to threaten me with an attempt to blast the character of one of the best and purest of God's making. Man, man! have you never heard of your own mother's shame! of her death! of her spirit going, without help of priest or clergy, to meet its God! and would you strive to heap on the innocent a curse like what fell on the guilty?"

Trufit's lip quivered. "Can't you hold your cursed babbling tongue, then?" he muttered.

"No, I can't, nor won't!" exclaimed Katty, with an heroic spirit that females would do well and wisely to cultivate. "I will not hould my tongue, where my own poor wake sex is imposed upon. Haven't I often seen the young, and the innocent, and the virtuous, drawn by

their natural goodness (which desavers like you twist as an halter about their necks, strangling them with their own good intentions, like seething the kid in its mother's milk)—haven't I often seen such, drawn into sin, and left to moulder away in it, till they sunk into a nameless grave! And why? Because there was none of their own sex found with enough judgment to watch over them; or with courage enough to draw them back after the first false step; or to give the broad, the loud, the determined, the steadfast LIE to what is almost as dangerous to a young woman—the *first false word that's even whispered against her honest fame!*"

"You'll gather a mob round the house," said Trufit, overpowered by her honest energy.

"And if I do," she answered, flashing her eyes upon the culprit, like meteors—"If I do, it won't be for nothing, you may depend upon that. If you plase, you'll sit down at that table, which is mighty convanient for the purpose—you'll sit down—there's pens and ink,

which I got for the darlint, and she forgot—and you'll just write what I'll bid you. Oh, very well! my young friend Paddy will be happy to have the handing out of you, I daresay. It's only a bit of certificate about Miss Marian's conduct while under your roof, that's all."

"Shut the window, then," said the trembling Trufit, "and I will write."

"The air's mighty sweet that comes into it," said Katty coolly; "and I don't see why I should, nor I won't—so just do as you're bid at once, or I'll get up a bit of a shindy below there, which, though it would be very devartin' to me and the neighbours, would be noways pleasant to you. There's three sweeps, two greengrocers, one pot-boy, two policemen, four butchers' boys, fine fellows at carrying news; they hear so much, and travel so quick. Oh, very well."

There were pens, ink, and paper on the table, and Trufit waited no farther bidding, but sat down to write, while Katty deliberately drew out and wiped her spectacles for the pur-

pose of looking over his shoulder to ascertain if he really wrote what she dictated. The picture might have been transcribed by Cruikshank: it had much of what might be termed "serious comedy" about it.

Trufit's face, though the nurse justly called it "bloated," had grown deadly pale; and a full, yet apparently bloodless, countenance has something very unnatural in its aspect. His hair looked disordered; and his hand trembled so violently that he could hardly guide his pen. Katty, having pushed the table a little from the window, leaned over his chair; her face flushed from recent agitation; the veins of her high, broad forehead swollen, so as to form rigid lines along her temples; and her nostrils dilating like those of a war-horse eager for the battle. Beneath the window stood the policemen, wondering what could be the matter; young Paddy suspecting that his old friend Katty had "summat" a-foot, and recapitulating to his brother D. the "rout" she had so recently got into, and which, together with her mystery and adroitness in extricating herself

from trouble, still formed a leading subject in police conversation.

"Is it the brandy or the nerves that's bothering yer hand?" she inquired.

"At Mrs. Macane's request," wrote the condemned, by Katty's dictation—"I gladly certify that during the time Miss Marian Winter resided under my roof"—('It is a pity there should be a lie in it, but I don't see how it is to be helped—your roof, indeed!'—this was a soliloquy of Katty's)—"she conducted herself in the most upright, honourable, and correct manner. I exceedingly regret that any circumstance should have given her pain!"

"Now, put your name to it, and read it out, that I may hear it properly." Trufit obeyed. "You may go now," she said, folding the document carefully up, and placing it in her bosom. "Paddy, my dear boy," she added, calling from the window to the policeman, "you may walk about—a gintleman I had here was taken so shocking bad—bad beyond believing (and that's no lie)," she added in an

under tone, "that I was afraid I should be forced to put him under your protection; but he's better now—come almost to himself."

The small mob dispersed slowly, disappointed of the amusement they expected—the greengrocers swinging their baskets, and the butchers' boys knocking the rails of the areas with the corners of their trays, a perambulatory exercise they are much addicted to. One policeman went off at a brisk pace; but Paddy remained within call, thinking his old friend might yet need his assistance.

"And now, Katty," said Trufit, "I have done your bidding—will you hear me?—If I have raked, and schemed, and seemed to prosper, I've paid for it. No one knows how hard I have paid for it. Your words brought back the long-gone times when I was an innocent boy."

"You never war an innocent boy!" interrupted the Nurse—"Never! you war ever a schemer."

"Well, at all events, I was a boy, and I had strong natural feelings. What can I do? If

I'm blown here—I'm done for. At this moment two executions threaten the house."

"Without reason," she interrupted again, "write them so; leave that poor weak woman the remnant she has—sell all the jigmarees you have dangling about you, and take shipping with your lawful wife and child to the Amerikees."

"It's too late," he muttered; "I must cut alone; not one of those puppies would give me ten pounds, if they thought I wanted them; indeed, Nurse, silence is your duty. I will allow Martha something comfortable a-week."

"Ask her to sell her husband for so much a-week!—Do you think she'll do it?" interrupted the Nurse, indignantly.

"No," he replied; "and what's more, she'll never *split* on me—she'll die first, and I *knew* that."

"And took advantage of it," said Katty, with a bitterness of tone and manner hard to bear. "You're worse than I thought you, and *pison* the air."

Before she could finish her harsh sentence, the door opened, and the entrance of Lady Isabella's servants compelled the discomfited Trufit to take his departure, and Katty proceeded immediately to Twickenham.

## CHAPTER III.

### A NEW INTRODUCTION.

MARIAN WINTER found it very difficult to restrain her tears, or control her over-bounding feelings, when in the twilight she sat in the comfortable and, to her thinking, splendid and luxurious library at the Deanery.

The natural restraint felt by both young and old, when first introduced into the society of persons of a rank much superior to their own, renders the most graceful constrained and awkward. Marian fancied she was breathing a celestial atmosphere—she could hear her heart beat—and the deferential manner with which she bowed and listened to every observation uttered by the good Dean was a beautiful example of that gentle humbleness which is the most natural, as well as the most becoming, tribute youth can pay to age. Un-

able longer to restrain her feelings, she requested Lady Isabel's permission to go to her chamber; and, trembling with a variety of emotions, which she could not define, but suffered from, almost to the bursting of her heart, she arose to bid Lord Augustus good night. He extended his hand to her, and, following the impulse of her over-excited feelings, she fell on her knees before the venerable man, and implored his blessing. While he was in the very act of bestowing it, and the beautiful maiden knelt before him, her head meekly bent, her hair descending in massy tresses, so as to shadow, if not shroud, her slender figure, while her fingers were clasped within each other, and pressed almost convulsively against her heart—it was an exquisite picture—the contrast between youth and age—each of matchless beauty; the one, like a ruin, hallowed, not overthrown, by time; the other, full of that glorious promise which, if supported in its growth, is sure to ripen into perfection.

Marian had knelt at the Dean's feet, where he was placed, his back to the door, so that

neither he nor Lady Isabella perceived the entrance of a third person, who stood unannounced in the doorway, uncertain whether to enter or return from whence he came. He was tall and handsome—that is, his features were regular and capable of much expression, their most general one being that of cheerfulness and bravery. He was the antipodes of the fashionable heroes of that particular time, who cultivated bile and moustaches, wandered about our streets with a most unhealthy and un-English air of sighing sentimentality—quoting such passages of Byron as tell the worst for his heart, whatever they may do for his genius; and getting up, by the expenditure of much time and trouble, a Corsair sort of expression, which rendered them particularly dangerous to the hearts of very tender young ladies, and still more sensitive widows and old maids. There was something of unearthly beauty in the attitude and appearance of Marian Winter that riveted the intruder to the spot. His cloak, of foreign fashion, fell from his shoulders; and, while Marian was

to the Rosery, and that visit will indeed be an affliction to the General, who dreads her as if she were a pestilence."

"So soon arrived!"

"Yes: Sir Henry's epistle doubtless bore the semblance of a mandate rather than a request; and Mrs. Peronett thought she might as well obey with a good grace—a grace, I must confess, she seldom affects."

"I know enough to know that if she remains the General's guest for any length of time, the Rosery will be anything but a pleasant residence for you during the next few weeks," said Lady Isabel;—"you must come to us frequently."

"And fall in love with poor Henry's beauty," replied Godfrey, laughing.

"No," said Lady Isabel, "you will do no such thing: with all my regard for this charming girl, I have too great a dread of a *mésalliance* to wish any one to fall into it. I must find out *who* Marian really is before I shall give my consent to her falling in love with anybody, or anybody's falling in love with her."

"Very good," Lady Isabel; "but suppose the peril should have been incurred already—I am sure Henry is deeply smitten; indeed, he raves of her night and day; it is therefore but fair to suppose the young lady's heart may also be touched."

"No, it is not—I am certain of it," replied Lady Isabel; "but, for all that, shall not permit you to be 'smitten,' as you call it, so do not think of it: I hope to find my protégée better employment than falling in love. Falling in love," repeated Lady Isabella sadly enough,—"they may well call it 'falling!'"

"Very good," said Godfrey Peronett, smiling his bright smile, that was radiant as a sunbeam; "very good, my dear lady; I do not pretend to be fore-armed, I have no desperate attachment just at present; but if your Marian was really as lovely in detail as she appears from the transient glance afforded me this evening — were she really well-born, and moreover well-educated—what *could* it all be to me? I have too much principle to marry

merely from interested motives—too much love of the beautiful to marry a fright—I believe I may say too much refinement to marry a person with an uninformed mind, and of low origin. And unfortunately I am poor!—so poor that it is not likely any girl, unless hampered with a defect of person, mind, or birth, would think of a poor, proud youth, who has ever more wealth on his back than in his pocket! You see, then, that Godfrey Peronett must not think of marriage until his fortune has improved, and by that time the hope and joyfulness of youth will be over, and those who would smile now will frown then! Necessity and its laws chill the warmest blood."

The subject was changed, for each felt that it was painful, and in a few moments the conversation became general. The Dean moralized occasionally. Lady Isabella spoke more than usual; her feelings had received a fresh impetus, and she gave out some of the treasures of a mind which was filled with gems of the richest value—ill-sorted and ill-arranged, but gems notwithstanding, of price and beauty.

Godfrey Peronett was refined, without affectation; brilliant, without effort; and earnest in his words, beyond the limits which fashion prescribes to its votaries: his nature was frank and brave, and he was natural—he *admired* all that was worthy of admiration in foreign lands, but he *loved* his own.

It might be imagined that half the young men in the world travel for the purpose of bringing home the absurdities of foreign countries; but Godfrey's travel had in nothing changed him, except indeed that he had rubbed off a few of those prejudices which a perfectly English education is apt to engender — this was all. His prospects, without being gloomy, were anything but cheerful: he had graduated at Oxford, but the pride and perversity of General Peronett's temper had prevented his choosing any profession except that of arms, which the young man's taste and talent did not incline to. This annoyed Sir Henry not a little; he could have forgiven Godfrey any wildness or extravagance of which he might

have been guilty, but he could not easily forgive him for being insensible to the glories of military achievements.

It was in vain his nephew assured him that he admired the art of war, and when he was quite a youth got up all his reading about the heroes of old before paying his annual duty-visit to his uncle. The old gentleman had penetration enough to perceive that the youth's heart was not with his lesson.

"It won't do, Godfrey," he said one morning after Godfrey had been holding forth and drawing a more poetical than truthful analogy between Hannibal and Napoleon; "it's very good of you to humour the old man by this sort of thing, but your heart is not in it, my boy! You got over that last ground lamely, and, talking the other morning of the charge, Sir,—the most wonderful charge ever made, by Ponsonby upon the very bayonets of the enemy—why, Godfrey, you lagged, Sir!—'Fore heaven! If our cavalry had tarried in that manner, the ensigns of the gallant

Ponsonby would have been steeped in English not in French blood!"

This cured Godfrey of attempting to show an interest where he did not feel it: he wished to go to the bar, but Sir Henry was guilty of a piece of tyranny towards him, perfectly unjustifiable; he would not permit him to follow his own inclinations, nor would he increase an income which was too small to support him in his proper sphere, even as a single man.

The Dean knew enough of his young friend to secure him a very warm place in his very warm heart: nothing could be more profitable to the one, or pleasant to the other, than the exchange of friendship between two such persons. Such friendship, in truth, from the young to the old has something in it approaching so nearly to veneration, that it hallows and elevates the feeling far above the common limits of ordinary minds; while the aged look upon a youthful friend with the tenderness which a mother bestows upon a cherished child. The hope, as regards this life, which is fast extinguishing in an aged bosom, revives in the

contemplation of the virtues it is believed will distinguish a young favourite. The buoyant days return; and if memory is sometimes chilled by the irresistible conviction, that what is now young and blooming must grow old, and feel to a certain degree the vanity of all human wishes and pursuits, still the race of life, *holding a blessed immortality in view*, is glorious, and those who have well run, fondly trust that those they love will run it better.

There is something peculiarly beautiful, and not uncommon, in a friendship between youth and age. Those in middle life live more for themselves, and with themselves; they are out of humour with disappointments, and would feign quarrel where they cannot improve: they are of the present, and with the present; they think youth treads too quickly on their heels, and that they themselves are running down old age. But men who, like Lord Augustus, have numbered threescore years, and counted at the end of each their gains as a balance to their losses, believing that *all* work together for their good—find more companion-

ship in youth than with the worldly-minded of middle life.

Very old persons live almost entirely with the past—the very young, as entirely with the future.

Lord Augustus Bingham thought Godfrey Peronett more interesting than ever: that evening he entered warmly into his feelings, and quite agreed with him that at four-and-twenty he was old enough to choose his own path through life.

"I tell you what, Godfrey; Isabella shall propitiate your uncle to-morrow morning, set all right touching her protégée, explain all matters (it is only from a lady he will listen to explanation), and then I will see what can be done for you."

"Ah, my dear Lord, you are very good," replied the young man; "but it will be useless all: he will burst out with a sweeping condemnation, drown your oil in his vinegar, and then I shall have black looks and sharp remarks during the remainder of my visit. My uncle has an excellent memory: he never for-

gets an injury, nor a kindness: better let him alone, my dear Lord—better let him alone!"

Godfrey's visit was prolonged to a late hour; and he left his friends, having exchanged the most kindly farewells, until the morrow.

Lady Isabella Gascoigne possessed more influence over General Peronett than any other person in the world, and she exercised it to good purpose the next morning.

The old gentleman received her at first with cold politeness, talked of the weather, hoped it would soon be fine enough to permit him to angle from his favourite turret, but carefully avoided any mention of Henry or Marian Winter. The conversation lagged—Lady Isabella was never a good talker, though a good thinker; at last it was at a stand-still, and the General fidgeted and looked towards the door, as if expecting his fair visitor to take her leave. At last Lady Isabella, by a desperate effort, sprang upon the subject: she repeated all that Doctor Darling had said in favour of the girl; she told the General how

smitten she had been by the foundling in her infancy; she believed herself suddenly gifted with the eloquence of an angel! She appealed to his feelings, and thought them made of cast-iron, for he interrupted her (politely) by desiring his valet to fetch Hafiz some milk; and just as she thought she perceived some symptoms of feeling manifesting themselves, he rang to know if the newspaper had been sent in to Mrs. Marabout.

"My dear Sir Henry," said the almost disconcerted lady, "I see you will not hear me."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Isabella, I hear and understand you; but I suppose (having requested your pardon for the interruption) I may be permitted to give any orders I please, as to what I require attended to, in my own house?"

"Most true," she answered in all gentleness; "and may not I bring a young, unprotected girl to *my* house, without running the risk of a cold reception from the oldest friend I have in the world?—I have known you as long as I have known Augustus."

The General replied not, but bowed stiffly, evidently untouched by her tenderness.

"I could," persisted Lady Isabella, "I could make you feel an interest, if not for this maligned and ill-used girl, at least for her nurse, that true and faithful-hearted woman, who is now at the Deanery."

"She there too!" exclaimed the General, pushing himself back in his chair, and elevating his white eye-brows, beneath which the Peronett eye flashed brightly. "I really was not before aware of the extent to which Lord Augustus Bingham had extended his establishment—I did not see the necessity that existed for converting his house into a refuge for the destitute."

"The houses of our clergy are sometimes, I must confess, converted to worse purposes," replied Lady Isabella, with more spirit than she usually evinced; "but this woman is at the Deanery, though I doubt if she would remain there long if *you* knew as much of her as I do."

"Much obliged to Lady Isabella Gascoigne

for her 'doubts,'" answered the little General, with more acrimony than before. "I suppose you think that, as my grandson (like a fool) thought fit to fall in love with the Miss, the *elder* fool, me, Sir Henry Peronett, cannot do better than fall in love with the *Madam!* Death! Lady Isabella! Do you think the Peronetts are a family of fools? 'Gad! Madam, I could hardly have believed it possible that you would have forced such abominable people under my very nose! Dirty Irish too!"

Lady Isabella paused: she had proved Marian's innocence—she had assailed the reason and the generosity of the implacable general; but she saw clearly that he would *not* be convinced—that all her efforts were useless. She could not bear to part in anger from an old friend, nor did she like to be foiled; her heart rose against the one, her spirit against the other. It was evident that she was contending with some strong emotion—stronger than the case required—if one might judge from the tremulous motion of her lips, and the colour that flushed and faded on her cheek.

"Well, General!" she said at last, "I think, if you knew all, you would be sorry for judging thus harshly, or rather not judging at all, more especially if you knew all about the poor Irish nurse. She is a soldier's widow!"

"Ah!" he exclaimed, folding one leg over the other; "that accounts for the brass in her composition. I dare say the young huzzy is her own child."

Lady Isabella did not appear to have heard the last observation, but continued, "Her husband was a favourite servant of your son's; and the woman speaks to this hour with tears of gratitude of his attention to her when she was ill of fever."

"A random shot, Madam, to touch either me or you, if possible."

"Of you the woman knows nothing—she never knew even the name which you adopted. She knew your son only as captain in the —— dragoons. She—"

"Psha!"—interrupted Sir Henry—"don't talk nonsense, Lady Isabel; I am not so easily imposed upon."

Lady Isabella's calm eye flashed at the old General's rudeness, but it was but for a moment—and she persisted. She told Sir Henry how her foot had tripped over the little deal box in Katty's lodging—how she had shown her the cherished portrait of the Duke.

This arrested the General's attention; instead of fidgeting about, ringing the bell, and pulling the ears of Hafiz, he began to sit still, and when she repeated the Irishwoman's strong and poetical language, his bright eyes were fixed upon her with an intensity of which he was perfectly unconscious. Lady Isabel became too much affected, when she mentioned the feather and the gauntlet, to observe the effect she produced: she did not see that every nerve of the old man trembled—that he grasped the elbows of his chair until the knuckles of his hands seemed starting from the skin, and the sinews of his throat were rigid as marble. Unable longer to stifle his emotion, he suddenly started up and exclaimed, "I'll not believe it! Madam, I'll not believe it—not unless I saw with my own

eyes the crest he always stamped within his glove."

"It is here," replied Lady Isabella, as she drew it forth and presented it to him. It was a soiled memento—a few drops of blood had originally stained its whiteness, and grown dark and dim from time: yet there they were still, witnesses of the strife that had stilled the beatings of many a heart; and Sir Henry observed them as, with trembling hands, he turned back the top of the soldier's glove to seek the well-remembered mark: having found what he sought, the old man turned in his chair and buried his face in its pillows; his shoulders heaved—and once, but once, burst forth the bereaved father's cry of agony, "My son! my son!"

Lady Isabella walked to the window: strong, for the moment, as were the old man's sufferings, they were not equal to hers, though she made no moan, nor suffered a sigh to escape her lips. She covered her face, unwilling that even the light should witness its convulsions; and, having at last conquered herself—a task

that frequent repetition had made less difficult — she waited till the General should speak.

"Isabella!" he said at last. His voice no longer gave utterance to the rasping tones of fretfulness and harsh temper; and, when Lady Isabel looked at him, his eyes were hollow and wet, his mouth drawn down—the whole expression of his countenance so suddenly changed, that the poor lady again turned away her head, to hide the gush of many tears that would not be controlled.

"I should not have pained you so, dear Sir," she said, "but that you would not be convinced this true hearted woman was other than a keen impostor."

"Ay," he replied, but paused between his words so as to rivet attention, seeing the sentence seemed hard to put together—"Ay, it *was* my own firmness—I might almost call it stubbornness—but I had no right to demand proof from you; if you were satisfied, it ought to have been enough!"

"Not a word more, my dear Sir; if she had

no other merit, her appreciation of what was so good—and beautiful—and great—"

"That will do!—Sorrow, such as we have suffered, bestows on women the strength of men, but makes men women. I never thought to have shed tears again—but my poor boy!"

It was some time before they spoke, and at last the old General, as if his heart had been suddenly opened, led Lady Isabel to his drawing-room, showed her his son's favourite dog, "that had licked his dying hand," he said, stuffed, lying upon a cushion; then pointed out one or two of his other favourites, preserved in the same manner. "His illness was long, poor fellow!" continued the General, "and his bride none of the most tender (she is as proud as Lucifer); and he used to amuse himself with this bird and his dogs. I have seen him lie upon that sofa for hours—the dews of weakness standing upon his brow—I often wiped them off myself. No, she had no tenderness for her husband, and has none for her son: he has said to me, more than once, 'I wish I had married Isabella!' There, I

see you grow pale again—I did not mean it—I never talk about these things—it is weakness; a gossiping old man is sure to be hated by his friends: so I am a bitter one, and am feared—better that—but I like to come here, to look at those things, to sit amongst them; and sometimes, it may be, indulge my bitterness by pondering on the insufficiency of station and the folly of worldly goods: my son was saved by none of them, though our rank and riches increased daily."

"Alas!" thought Lady Isabel, "how we deceive ourselves! The good General, to this hour, is as proud of, and as eager for, family distinction as he was in the days of his youth."

His heart, however, was softened, and he parted from his fair friend with an earnest entreaty that she would send the Irish nurse to see him; and only remember to keep Marian out of Henry's way, if she should visit the Rosery.

"She is an angel, I dare say," he added; "but there are distinctions, my dear Lady, even in Paradise; though perhaps the Dean

would not agree with me: and a Peronett, you know—a Peronett! My dear Lady Isabella—a Peronett!" he repeated again, as he closed the door on the treasure-house of his memories, and leaned for a moment on his gold-headed cane, and drew his shrunken figure to its utmost height. "A Peronett, my dear friend," he added, "is not to be trifled with."

The tenderness had passed away, and the hauteur returned, despite his moralizing. Certainly, people do moralize without ever dreaming of bringing the moralities home to themselves; and this is what makes so many contradictions when you come to compare the world's theory with the world's practice.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MARIAN IN REPOSE.

It would be difficult to analyse the feelings with which Marian awoke to this new existence—for new indeed it was: the kindness of Lady Isabel, the Dean's benevolence, the joy of her beloved nurse — each succeeding the other—were more like spells, the spells of a happy land, where there were no tears, no anxieties, no troubles. She was filled with joy and gratitude. Not many weeks had elapsed—and she was living a new life, in a new world, remembering only the past to enhance the sweetness of the present. Her heart's beatings—lest it should be a dream, not a reality—had hardly subsided; and when, each morning she awoke, she could scarcely believe that what surrounded her was less than fairy-land. It was with mingled delight and astonishment that Lady Isabel discovered her

rare excellence in music. She had not only completely mastered the mechanical part of the science, but infused into her performance that pure and exquisite spirit which, like genius, cannot be taught—it cometh we know not whence; but it is impossible to listen to vocal or instrumental music such as hers without feeling that Nature has bestowed "a grace beyond the reach of art." Her voice was a soprano, not of extensive compass, but of the finest tone, particularly on the middle notes, where expression so fully tells.

Lady Isabel, accustomed to the best music of Italy, was astonished not only at its richness, as it rolled forth in purest melody, but at the beauty of her conceptions and the truth of their delineation. The few songs she sang were chosen with admirable skill, and she succeeded in exciting whatever interest she pleased in her hearers. Lady Isabel was spell-bound by the charm of this extraordinary talent—it was something so original, so different from anything she had expected. As yet Marian had only learned the simple melo-

dies of her own land, and a few as simple French songs; but hers was a voice which evidently could sing anything — round and flexible, perfect in its intonations, and capable of the highest culture. To have understood the pleasure experienced by Lady Isabel at this discovery, it would be necessary to understand the power sweet sounds possessed over her feelings; to those who comprehend this, explanation would be unnecessary; those who do not would think us gone mad on the subject. It is indeed labour in vain to attempt proving to the unmusical the power of music— that high, and pure, and holy enjoyment, which, we may believe, is one of the delights we are to experience in heaven.

"I do not like to see tears in your eyes, Lady Isabel," said Marian, when she finished singing one of the sweet ballads of poor Ireland, whose euphonous termination, "*Colleen das crutheen amo,*" she had learnt to pronounce, with its natural softness, from our friend Katty Macane. "I do not like to see

tears in your eyes, dear Lady Isabel: why should you ever shed tears?—you, so good, so happy, so rich, so independent: what made you cry, dear lady?"

"Your music, my dear child."

"I ought to be happy at that!—to think of my nurse's ballad making you weep!"

"It is even so," replied Lady Isabel: "ballads such as that excite in a double way, by the words and music, both playing on the feelings together. That voice, Marian, is a fortune!"

"I wish it would make me one: do you think it would?" inquired the girl eagerly.

"Yes, I am sure of it—there can be no doubt about the matter."

"Oh then, dear Lady Isabel," she exclaimed joyfully, "only tell me *how* I can set about it: you have been so good, so generous to me, that you will not refuse me this request, and then I should be independent: it would make me very, very miserable if I thought that all my life I was to be only a dependant—a thing

to subsist upon the cast-off food and cast-off smiles of others! Oh, Lady Isabel, if I could once, even, earn my own bread!"

"You earned it with Mrs. Jones, my poor girl—you surely earned it there."

"I might perhaps have earned food, dear Lady Bell, but not money. I wore the cast-off garments of charity."

"Say, of justice rather—they were earned."

"My dear Lady, I could not think they were; when anything approaching finery was given to me, I could not bear to put it on—I felt how strange the charity-child that crossed my path would look decked out in ribands. I loathed myself."

"No, Marian," replied her friend, "you loathed you dependence; you were proud, child—too proud; that was the pride that 'apes humility.' I do not wish to wound your feelings, Marian; but, in the many tales you have told me, where you were stern and stubborn—and I loved you all the better, because you did not spare yourself—I traced it all to pride."

"But I could kneel and kiss the dust beneath your feet, and the good Dean, too; I could serve Lord Augustus, not only as a servant but a slave; my old nurse, my fond and faithful nurse, I could beg for her. Oh, Lady Isabel, is that pride?"

"It is not humility, my dear child; it is affection. We have not insulted you; if we had——"

"Dear Lady Isabel!" exclaimed Marian, astonished at the idea; but seeing her Ladyship smile, she reverted to her old purpose. "But this voice—I have practised it as you told me; and now that I understand the Italian words your Ladyship so kindly translated, I think I do better; I shall not be content with doing better, I want to do well."

"Marian," said Lady Isabel, "listen to me. You have, above all others, a quality which will render you either very great or very mean —there is no medium—it is PRIDE."

"Oh, Lady Isabel," she interrupted warmly, "what should a foundling do with pride?"

"True; and I may add, what should any

one do with pride?—*false* pride, that builds unto itself a pyramid of false greatness, and frets itself into perpetual agitation, lest its pyramid should be assailed. You have unhappily lived with those who sought to undervalue you; your feelings, stimulated by pride, rebelled—you became harsh and irritable; expecting hourly assault, your defiance was ever ready; so that I am not quite certain but that, at times, you might have been the aggressor."

"Not only might, my Lady," said the frank-hearted girl, "but *was*. I can call to mind many instances when I *was* the aggressor; and now, when I am so happy, I wonder how I could ever have been so bitter. But was it pride?"

"Yes: think, and you will see it was."

"But, dear Madam, is the pride that rises against oppression wrong?"

"No, provided it does not degenerate into anger against the oppressor. The sea is deep, my child, but pride is deeper, nor is it more deep than deceitful; it will often seem to betray itself, the more successfully to betray thee.

I would have you watch this pride, and separate it from that great and glorious ambition which all great men, and a few great women, have understood."

"Lady Isabella, why did you say *a few great* women?"

"Because, though many are celebrated, few are great. Women are at so early a period bound to the littlenesses of life, that it is no easy matter for them to break the thousand small intricate chains which keep them down on every side, and which, after all, except with very extraordinary talents, and under peculiar circumstances, had, perhaps, better be only loosened. There are, however, many heroic women, clad in English russet, whose sufferings and whose virtues deserve the Martyr's crown. To be truly great we must be above the weaknesses—the petty ambitions of life, soaring as the eagle in the heavens with only the sun in view."

"As I should like to soar!" exclaimed the young enthusiast, "and my sun should be independence."

"And," said Lady Isabella, "if you attained it by the most praiseworthy exertions, you would then desire one other—the only one that ever made woman, however great—happy."

"What is that, Madam?"

Lady Isabella paused; the word "Love" was on her lip, but she sent it back, and said, "Affection."

"I do not know," replied the maiden, "but I think I should like to be great."

"And so should I like you to be great in goodness! You have been reading this morning the biography of two very celebrated women: whom would you rather have been — Queen Elizabeth, or Lady Rachel Russel?"

Marian paused not, but replied instantly, "Oh, Lady Rachel, to be sure!"

Lady Isabella drew her breath freely. "Thank God!" she instantly exclaimed, "she is right-hearted!"

Well did Lady Isabella know that a love of independence is the abundant seed of a glorious fruitage.

At Lady Isabella's request, Marian sang

one of Mozart's cavatinas, and again delighted her friend.

"You will let me make my fortune by this voice, will you not, dearest lady?" she inquired. "I am sure God gave it me for that purpose."

"I am not sure of any such thing," replied Lady Isabella, "but we shall see."

"I should like," said Marian, and her eyes flashed—(Sir Henry would have been quite satisfied *if* his grandson's eyes had been as bright; indeed, though he had seen Marian but once, he was quite astonished at what he called "her well-*born* air")—"I should like to meet with such applause as I heard you tell Lord Augustus was bestowed upon Madame Catalani, at the *Scala*."

"Indeed!"

"Oh, dear Lady Isabella, yes, I should!"

"Would you not be satisfied with the half?"

Marian paused. "I do not quite think I should be satisfied with half. I mean I would labour night and day to achieve greatness, to deserve the whole. Do not look displeased, my dear, dear Lady; have I said what was wrong?'

"I like you to say to me what you think," she replied, "but we must clip those wings."

"How delightful it must be to receive the homage of congregated thousands; a homage so palpable, so plain, that it cannot be mistaken. Must it not, Lady Isabella, be delightful? I often think of it—very often since your ladyship talked of *La Scala*."

"That is the bright side of the picture," said Lady Isabella: "it has, like all pictures, its reverse."

"Have all pictures a reverse?" said the smiling Marian.

Lady Isabella Gascoigne looked at her protégée with astonishment. "But a few weeks escaped from misery, intense misery," she thought within herself, "and yet here she is asking me if all pictures have their reverse; happily forgetful of the past, or remembering enough of it only to make the present brightness more intense! Oh, happy, happy youth!

"You have asked me, Marian, if all pictures have their reverse? I will show you the reverse of one in a few days, and now I will tell you of the

brightness. A young woman, gifted with the highest order of dramatic talent, ruined by a faulty education, defective in principle, but warm of heart; abandoned by a debased husband; curtseying last winter to the applause of thousands, and now——But I will, as I said, show you the reverse. It will teach you how far the breath of popularity is to be trusted."

Many such conversations passed between the lady and her charge, in which each felt the value of the other increase ten-fold. Marian's mind and feelings had been so long cramped and confined, that now they burst out in the summer sun like a fresh mountain-stream from whence the boundary has been removed, and sparkled in the full enjoyment of light and liberty. She was not like the same creature; and, had she looked back into herself, a sort of perspective (if we may be permitted the blunder) youth is seldom addicted to, she would have indeed wondered at the coldness and acidity of her past feelings.

Katty was elected queen of the kitchen, Doctor Darling having vouched for her capa-

bilities. Mrs. Peronett had made but a hasty visit at the Rosery, so hasty that she had not seen Marian, and was established in town. The General had asked a few questions of Katty, who was fully prepared to treat "a born general, and the noble Captain's father" with all the homage even a Peronett could desire, and had not done wondering at the uncommon luck of finding her dear master, Captain Halliday, "the *rale* son of that beautiful, clean, cranky, ould, brave, little gintleman, Gineral Sir Henry Peronett, barrowknight, who, to be sure, was not the laste taste in life like his noble son—barring the eyes, which war always remarkable; Captain Halliday being said to have the finest eyes, and the studdiest hand in the regiment, God bless him! And certainly the General's eyes *favoured* the dear Captain's a good bit."

General Peronett had seen Marian but once, and the only observation he made was "that she had fine eyes;" Sir Henry having always considered every other feature of no importance.

Lady Isabella, very wisely, never introduced

any conversation about her, though she was greatly pleased to find that several of their mutual friends had been unconsciously paving the way to his good opinion, by speaking in the warmest terms of praise of Lady Isabella's protégée, and extolling her musical talent as something almost supernatural.

The good Dean was delighted to have anything so young, so lovely, so intelligent, to converse with, and Marian's education had been too defective not to give ample scope for those short lectures and diminutive sermons which Lord Augustus was prone to indulge in at times, and which certainly did Marian a great deal of good. The excellent man was charmed to find that her mind was altogether free from every taint of meanness, and her manners as graceful and as unrestrained as if she had been bred at court. The peculiar observances of that class of society of which she had so lately become a member were at once comprehended, and her natural good feeling and good taste prevented her ever being guilty of any of those trifling transgressions

which so distinctively stamp the breeding of man or woman.

Godfrey Peronett saw Marian frequently during his visits to his uncle, which during Henry's stay at Oxford were frequently repeated, and more than once spoke to her of his cousin Henry; her replies (though a blush was called to her cheek by the mention of a name which had been joined with hers in a way that makes young ladies blush, whether the accusation be true or false)—her replies to his observations were free from embarrassment, and she at last avoided, in accordance to what she saw was Lady Isabella's desire, all mention of his name. Godfrey's visit was within a day of its termination; and Marian (completely domesticated at the Deanery) was able to walk in the garden without seeing the only window that overlooked the flowers crowded by the four heads of the four Misses Skinner, who, having nothing very particular of their own to do, varied their time by observing the movements of their neighbours, and to whom Lady Isabella Gascoigne's protégée was an object of

intense interest. Fortunately for poor Marian, a lady's character in the neighbourhood was imagined to require either repair or pulling to pieces, and in either case their time would be fully occupied, so the protégée was suffered to walk up and down the pretty garden, whose lawn sloped to the very margin of the Thames, where it joined the General's small domain. These joining domains are dangerous things—very dangerous where there are young people. Flower-pulling—gazing on clouds or rivers—even exchanging salutations early or late of a summer-day, are all to be avoided where youths and maidens are concerned, and where falling in love would be deemed imprudent. It is extraordinary how very blind I have seen grave, steady persons to the vicinity of the little laughing god, who is ever lying in ambush behind haystacks, or hawthorn hedges or rose-bushes ; nay, an instance is on record where a serious attachment was commenced through the trellis-work of a huge dusty geranium, spread out after the fashion of those dangerous flirting fans that revive the days of

one's grandmother. Whenever big boys and girls in the country (they may do so in town almost with impunity) go on singing duets, gathering flowers, and walking together, there is sure to be some danger, or hope, as the case may be, of their being united for life. Marian Winter, however, though the gardens did join, never exchanged a single violet, or even a decided glance with, Godfrey Peronett: not but that he admired beauty by far too ardently to be insensible to the loveliness of his fair neighbour; but Marian was reserved and stately, and would not even return the smile which accompanied the bow that Godfrey had ceased to think was too low to be made to—"Nobody knew who!"

The morning, however, previous to his departure, Marian was engaged in feeding some favourite birds of Lady Isabel's, in a summer-house at the end of the garden, a rustic building with steps, and a porch and two shaded windows, when she was astonished by Godfrey's entrance.

"I come," he said, "Miss Winter, to fulfil

a request of my cousin Henry Peronett's: he promised his grandfather that he would not see you, but he did not promise him that he would not write to you."

And he drew forth a letter, which he presented to Marian, whose face crimsoned while he addressed her.

"Will you not take it?" he added, as she stood before him, her eyes bent upon the ground, her arms motionless by her side. "Will you not take your lover's letter?" he repeated.

"My lover's letter!" she said.

"Nay," expostulated the young man, endeavouring to conceal his feelings by an air of levity, "you could not think that Henry Peronett was exiled for *your* sake, and suppose that you were indifferent to him."

"Henry Peronett exiled for my sake!" she repeated in astonishment.

"You are a sweet, as well as a fair echo!" replied Godfrey. "But will you not take Henry's letter?"

Marian paused for a minute; it would have

been a pleasure to receive a letter from Henry Peronett at any time, though her maiden modesty might have obliged her to hesitate how she took it; but when it was put to her, if she would not receive a *letter from a lover*, presented to her *clandestinely*, all the proper spirit of a right-minded woman rose within her, and, with a dignity of manner whose nobleness would have formed a fine study for an actress, she replied, "No, Sir!—I am sorry any friend of Lady Isabel's should think so lightly of me as to suppose I could forget myself, whatever Master Peronett may do." Then, as if remembering what Godfrey had said, she repeated, "Exiled for my sake—exiled for my sake!"

"Indeed, Miss Marian," exclaimed Godfrey, "this looks very like affectation. You must know that Sir Henry Peronett dreads the influence of your bright eyes upon his grandson, and has given him to understand that his visits to the Rosery must be discontinued while you reside at the Deanery. Henry has, however, importuned me to deliver you this,

telling you what he never had courage to speak. I confess myself something of an unwilling messenger."

"And well you may, Sir!" interrupted Marian, who had been collecting strength for her reply. "Do you think me altogether unworthy of the benevolent protection I have received here? Do you think, if I took that letter, that I would break its seal before Lady Isabel had seen it?—and do you think that I would receive it at all from the grandson of the man who thinks it necessary to exile his child on my account? Sir, you do not know me."

"I have no more to say," replied Godfrey, who certainly had not been a warm advocate; "but, from what I heard, I imagined that my cousin was not indifferent to you."

"Nor is he!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands fervently while she spoke—"Nor is he! He was the one, the only one, who showed me gentle kindness in that wretched house—the only one; but for him I should not have been blessed—protected *here*. I never can forget it—I shall ever remember it with the warmest

gratitude, and bless him for it while he lives!"

"Then will you not receive his letter?"

"No, Sir:—I regard him as a brother; had I a brother, do you think I would assist him in a dishonourable object? No—I will not take his letter; but I will not be the means of depriving him of what I know the value of, from having so long wanted—a home."

She turned from Godfrey, who was unprepared to meet, in one so young, so beautiful, so richly endowed by Nature with her fairest gifts, a mind rightly tuned upon a subject where love, vanity, or folly so often combine to destroy the harmony which else were perfect.

"What are you about to do?—where are you going?" he inquired.

"To your uncle, Sir," she answered.—"The clock of Twickenham church has just struck, and at this hour he walks to his fishing-pavilion—I will seek him there: for once I will pass through the wicket-gate by which you must have entered."

She pointed towards a little gate in the wall that divided the gardens, of which Lord Augustus retained one key, and Sir Henry the other.

"Marian," exclaimed Godfrey, "you are mad!—you surely would not betray Henry to his grandfather, and me too! Will you remember that the old gentleman knows nothing of this? I will trouble you no more on the subject—I honour your feelings."

"You honour my feelings!" she said, with more contempt of manner than Godfrey Peronett had ever experienced from a woman before—"And yet you would have me act in direct opposition to those feelings. I do not know why—but I thought *you* could not wish anything so dishonourable!"

And here must be described a little scene that might form the by-play of a drama. It has been already stated that there were two rustic windows in this summer-house, one looking towards General Peronett's garden, the other commanding a view of a narrow trellised-walk leading to the Deanery. God-

frey had possessed himself of the key of the garden-gate, but, not fastening it properly, it flew open, and the General, being abroad earlier than usual, walked into his friend's garden; hearing Godfrey's voice, he established himself close to one of the windows, in time not only to hear but to see Marian's rejection of Henry's letter. He was so intent on observing the scene, that the nurse, who, whenever she could escape from the kitchen, followed her darling's footsteps, wandered up the trellised walk, and found herself outside the opposite window to that occupied by the General. The moment he perceived that another person was present, he made a gesture of silence, which Katty, versed in the integrity and honour of Marian's mind, was well pleased to obey; and at almost every word she uttered, Katty threw a glance of triumph across the background to the General, enjoying the fullest luxury this world can give, in the knowledge that what she loved must be appreciated. There was a tenderness in her voice when she said " I thought you could not

wish anything so dishonourable," that penetrated a heart she had already touched; and Godfrey, the frank, proud, impassioned Godfrey, felt inclined to throw himself at the foundling's feet, and declare that he loved her (as he certainly did at that moment) beyond all that the world could give; but he restrained himself, though, as he gazed upon those features to which excitement had lent an expression of dignity and beauty seldom given us to look upon, he felt that, if Marian Winter was indeed base-born, the most glorious flowers might grow, as daisies, by the wayside.

"I would not wish anything dishonourable," he replied, "but Henry so implored me to speak to you of his love, and I fancied the feeling was mutual; and I may confess that I desired most earnestly to know if this was the case."

"Could you not have asked Lady Isabel?" she said, innocently.

"Love is treasured," he replied, "too deeply in a maiden's heart to be intrusted to Lady Isabels."

"Therefore you thought to betray it?—Oh, Sir, this was not generous!"

The heroine was softening into the girl—tears were flowing from her eyes as she attempted to descend the few steps leading down the porch.

"I will write all that has passed to my cousin," said Godfrey, detaining her; "I could not refuse his request; but now——"

"Let me pass, Sir," interrupted Marian; "your writing to him will not remove the ban which keeps him from his grandfather's house: the old gentleman lost a gallant son, and has little else to love but Master Peronett. I will tell Lady Isabel this: she could not, I think, have known it. I will tell the General—I would not take that youth's love if it would make me Queen of England: perhaps he will suffer him to come home then."

"But," said Godfrey, seizing her hand, "you know not what you do. Mrs. Peronett is a harsh, stern woman—she came to the Rosery last night—the General may be with her; you have never seen her yet, she may

insult you. Speak, if you must speak, first to Lady Isabel: she knows that Henry is forbidden to come here, and I thought she had told you so. Dear Marian, be advised! Forgive me—but the General is such a proud old fellow, that, though he could not bear the idea of Henry's offering love to you, yet he would never pardon your having in idea rejected his grandson's affections. I know him much better than you do."

"I do not know him at all," replied Marian, still firm to her resolve; "but I only want to tell him the truth."

"The very thing he cannot bear!" exclaimed Godfrey. "He is at times the most liberal old man upon earth; and I love him, harsh as he often is to me; but he never could bear the truth."

"Indeed!" growled out the General, having moved from the window so as to come directly opposite the porch at the moment that Godfrey repeated his uncle's dislike to hearing the truth, a dislike, by the way, not at all peculiar to General Peronett—"Indeed!" he exclaimed,

striking his gold-headed cane so smartly on the rustic pavement as to make a little grey and a little white stone spring into the air, while Hafiz walked up to Marian in a patronising manner, and thrust his cold, finely-polished nose into her hand, insinuating his long pink tongue between her fingers, in a way which he considered exceedingly complimentary. "So that is your opinion, is it? Upon my word, I am prettily situated between my nephew and my grandson—marching and countermarching—signs and countersigns. I have stood, Sir, opposite that window—not listening, Sir, but hearing.—I wonder, Godfrey, that you had not more sense than to interfere in such a matter—a boy and girl fancy!"

"I beg your honour's pardon, Gineral, dear," said Katty, moving, curtsey by curtsey, round the other side of the porch; "but if, Sir Henry, Sir, you'll be good enough just to call to mind the rights of it, you'll remember, Sir, that *the girl* had nothing to do with it."

"Hold your tongue, woman!" exclaimed the General.

"Certainly, this very minute, Sir Henry, if you plase," was the nurse's meek reply.

"Your resolve, young lady," continued the General, "did you honour; though I must confess I do think your treating his—his—letter so—that is, considering all things—was rather—rather a haughty measure for——but —it was honest—it was honest!"

"I am glad you think that it was honest, Sir," said Marian, while her short lip curled, and her eye flashed with indignation, at her generosity being thus thrown back upon herself—"I am glad you think that it was honest, Sir—though it is but a plebeian virtue."

The proud hot blood, quick mounting to her cheek, scorched up the tears that but the moment before had gushed from her eyes. She tried to speak again, and something to the purport, that Lady Isabel would tell him the rest, came from her lips; but she could not complete her sentence; and, having curtsied, more in pride than humility, to the General, she swept out of his sight before he had re-

covered in the least from the astonishment her independent conduct had occasioned.

General Peronett was too deeply mortified not to be very angry; and he was most especially provoked to think that Katty Macane had witnessed his mortification. If Marian had been an earl's daughter, he would have put up with the affront, which, though in exact accordance with his wishes, he exceedingly resented at the moment, as coming from a young *parvenue*, who should have deemed the notice of a Peronett an extreme honour. When he cooled, the uprightness and generosity of her conduct would have appealed to his justice; but at the moment he only felt that Henry Peronett had been insulted by a foundling. His displeasure was increased by Katty's clasping her hands in honest admiration of her idol, and exclaiming—

"See that, now! Hasn't she the voice and the look of a queen?"

"Go home, woman; you are a fool! Follow your—your—whatever she may be—at once."

"I will, Sir," replied the Nurse, "follow her

as you say. I did follow her all her life; and am not ashamed of my sarvice. You ought to go down on yer two knees, Gineral, Sir, and bless the Almighty God for the virtue and nobleness of that young lady, who, if she chose, could make yer grandson do what she'd plase, and no thanks to any one—though I wouldn't countenance that."

"Begone, woman!" exclaimed the General, —"Lady Isabel shall hear of this."

"Your son, Heaven be his bed! never spoke to me after that fashion, Sir Henry, Sir;" said Katty. "I wish yer honour good morning; and when yer honour gets a little cool and rasonable, you'll see the difference. Only, God help us! a hot brain, and no wit, is the same thing with rich and poor. I'm gone, Sir. You'll be very sorry, Gineral, dear, whin you come to yourself; but she'll not think bad of you for it, Sir. She's like a pigeon, Sir Henry, without gall."

"The little insignificant, poor little ould gintleman," muttered the nurse, as she hastened after Marian: "it was well for him he

was a Gineral—sarved with the Duke—father to the dear Captain—or Katherine Macane's tongue would have rung in his ears for many a long day. Poor dear! she often asked when Masther Peronett would be at the Rosery, but Lady Bell bid me not tell, because of hurting her feelings; and it's quare to me how quite sisterly her regard for him is—though he's nothing like his father, yet he's a fine boy! Oh, the pride of the world! to think that the Gineral should look down upon her because of the birth—the birth! which, if it isn't an advertisement to a man's goodness, is an advertisement to his shame! I'm sure, but it's a quare world—people fretting themselves to fiddle-strings about nothing! and making trouble for themselves, whin their paths are thick strewn with blessings! Och, my grief! I knew there'd be a shindy of some kind by my drame! but the goodness of the Lord is high above us all, as the sun in the heavens, and below us, as deep as the sea, and close around us, as the air we breathe. So what signifies thinking about drames? only still

I'd like to know the maning of the five pins? —I never did like draming of pins—sharp words—well, sure we had them, and so the danger is over. God be good to us! There's Miss Marian's shadow crossing Lady Isabella's window. I know her shadow above all the shadows I ever see—it flies like a swallow's wing—so light and graceful!"

Katty's mutterings continued until she entered the servants' hall.

## CHAPTER V.

### A SHADOW OF COMING EVENTS.

"But, my dear Lady Isabella, what was I to do? Henry Peronett worried me unceasingly about her. I had to endure his reproaches; and at last he taxed me with being in love with her myself, declaring his conviction that that was the reason why I would not ascertain if he possessed any interest in her heart. I think Henry's affection for this girl has purified his mind more than any other circumstance of his life, and I must confess that I did feel a great degree of interest to know how she would receive the communication I was about to make."

So spoke Godfrey Peronett to Lady Isabella Gascoigne, who had reproved him in severe terms for presenting a letter clandestinely to a young person under her protection.

"Suppose," she replied to his explanation,

—"suppose, for a moment, she had taken that letter, and answered it without my knowledge, what would you have done?"

"My interest in her would have expired; but I felt quite assured this would not be the case—I thought I could not be deceived—I was *certain* I could not be deceived!"

"Man all over!" exclaimed her Ladyship; "tempt to the sin, and expose the sinner!"

"Will you hear me?"

"I have heard enough to be convinced that you have nothing more to say but what you have already said: the truth is you wanted to probe Marian's character, and having done so, finding it sound and pure and perfect, you are a little ashamed of having used the probe so freely. It is difficult to make a man, who knows anything of the depraved, or even the betrayed of our sex, believe in the omnipotence and omnipresence of female virtue!"

"Depraved!" repeated Godfrey, "Oh, Lady Isabella, that is the most severe thing you ever said to me."

"I hope it may continue so," she replied, coolly, "for if you deserve anything more severe, you may depend upon it you will hear it."

"You are angry, dear Lady! I thought you had known me too long to be soon displeased."

"I am not soon displeased, but it was cruel to sport with Marian's feelings: she had no idea that Henry was prevented visiting the Rosery on her account; and the General—it is extraordinary how his prejudices lead him astray!"

"I will wear his chains no longer," interrupted Godfrey; "I am determined on that point. Henry's mother has, as usual, been dropping prejudice, grain by grain, into his mind against me; and the *contretemps* of this morning has ripened the seed to maturity. He may be displeased or not; I will be the architect of my own fortunes—work my way at the bar—and trust to myself for success. If Mrs. Peronett loved her son I could forgive her, but she never loved him, and yet her subtle jea-

lousy penetrates everywhere! She has ever seemed to me a most mysterious woman !"

" She is both a mysterious and an unhappy woman," replied Lady Isabella; " but I trust this little misunderstanding may be adjusted —you cannot wonder at your uncle's being displeased with you."

" My dear Lady Isabella, I did no more than any young man would do for his friend: it is better that Henry should know the truth, which he never would have done had I not heard Marian's indifference to his love from her own lips—he would not believe any testimony but hers. I should grieve to lose my place in her esteem, for it is worth possessing. She will see me, and forgive me ere I go; I have caused her much pain, but it was indeed unintentional."

Before Lady Isabella could reply she received a slip of paper from Mrs. Peronett, saying she wished to see her at the General's, as she was too unwell to venture out, even across the garden; the footman added that Mrs. Peronett's own maid had brought it with

a request that Lady Isabella would come instantly, as her Mistress was very ill.

When her Ladyship entered Mrs. Peronett's room, she found her in a state of the strongest possible excitement. She was walking to and fro with the restless gait of a caged lioness. Having thrown off her head-dress, her long black hair mingled with grey streamed over her shoulders: her arms were only partially concealed by the loose open sleeves of her dressing-gown, and when Lady Isabella approached she flung them towards her with a motion that made her start back into the door-way. "Come in!" she exclaimed, and the clear, loud, inharmonious tones of her voice rang round the room, which was all too small for such a person, and her eyes looked strained and haggard. "Come in, Lady Isabella, and shut the door!"

Lady Isabella entered, and did as she required.

"Oh," she continued, "how calm and placid you look! I was always a tornado, you a gentle stream! What! are you astonished?

I am not well—that is all; I am very unwell. Sit down here by me, and I well tell you how annoyed I am—in short I want your advice. I shall be composed in a few moments: give me that eau de Cologne." She took the vase that was filled with the perfume, and, bending her head, poured its contents amid her hair until it streamed over her to the ground. "There, that will make me better!" she said, twisting up her tresses, "for my head was hot—burning hot! How cool *you* look! Just feel my hands, are they not burning?"

"They are feverish," said Lady Isabella, "so feverish, that I would recommend you not to talk, but lie down and keep quiet."

"Now," rejoined Mrs. Peronett, "that is so like you!" and she attempted to laugh, but the effort brought to mind the mirthfulness of some powerful but fiendish spirit. "Keep quiet—keep quiet—always your motto; I am sure you ought to know by this time that it is utterly impossible for me to keep quiet."

"You must try then, or I will send for one of the medical oracles, Doctor Darling, or

Doctor somebody else, to bleed and blister," said Lady Isabella, taking her hands kindly within her own—"You are really very ill."

"I know I am—I feel I am, and I shall be mad soon, unless I get better. Mad! just at the time when an increased income enables me to live with the splendour I have coveted —quite mad, fit to receive—my son!—my hopeful son, the companion of roués and black-legs, for whose convenience I was recalled from Italy. My God!" she added bitterly, and, to her friend's horror, she struck her brow violently with her clenched hand—"my God! what a cursed world it is!"

Lady Isabella persuaded at the moment that she was really out of her senses, attempted to ring the bell.

"No, Isabella," she said, "I sent for you that I might have some one near me, who would bear with this: I cannot endure the idea that a menial should witness this wild weakness, of which I am myself ashamed. Proud as I am—I, who never asked for pity, ask for it now. Do have mercy on me, and if I

should go mad, do not let me be left to the rude gaze, or ruder handling of mere mercenaries!" She laid her perfumed head upon Lady Isabella's shoulder, and trembled so violently, that her friend prayed that tears might come to the relief of her poor throbbing brow; but no, her eyes gleamed in their sockets like balls of fire, and her pulses beat as if they would burst her slender wrists.

"My dear friend!" exclaimed Lady Isabella, excited by her sufferings to bestow an epithet upon her which she had never done before.

Mrs. Peronett raised her head and looked at her, as though she would penetrate her inmost soul. "Your friend," she repeated,—"you called me your dear friend! We have been companions, Isabella, for years, but you never called me friend before."

"I never before saw you apparently so much in need of the truth and tenderness of friendship," replied Lady Isabella.

"Is it to your *pity* then I owe the distinction?" inquired the proud woman. Lady Isabella made no reply. "Because, if it is, I must de-

cline the honour. Oh, Isabella!" she added, passionately, after a moment's pause, "forgive me! *I have never been worthy of your friendship.*"

"This is no time for words," replied her gentle companion; "if my sympathy—my advice—my attention can be of use, command them freely, anything I can do I will do; only for your own sake—for your son's sake, you must be calm: this agitation, which I cannot understand, will destroy you."

"I wish to God it would!" exclaimed the half-frantic woman, "and then I should know what my punishment would be in the next world. Look! if this room were one entire diamond, I would give it to be heart and soul either an Atheist or a Roman Catholic. Think of the comfort it would bring to believe that there was no such thing as retributive justice, or that we could buy out our own salvation by gifts, gewgaws, and baubles, spread upon altars;—the vanities of this world exchanged for the happiness of the next."

"If," said Lady Isabella, affecting a power

she did not feel, "you do not endeavour to be calm, I will summon the servants, and leave you in their care."

"Well—I will be—I am so—tell me now!" and the abruptness of the question startled her friend; "for I have just heard the story of Henry Peronett's affection—or call it, if you will, *fancy* for your *protégée* (the circumstances of whose birth were told me this morning by the General for the first time). Tell me then, do you think this girl does not really like Henry? I mean do you think that by and by she would object to marry him?"

"I really cannot say. I think she would. With all my partiality for your son, I do not think he would be likely to gain the affections of such a girl as Marian. You have hardly seen her; but even at her age——"

"How do you know her age—is she not a foundling?" interrupted Mrs. Peronett.

"Yes; but her nurse has a memorandum of the day and hour she was found; and it is impossible to be much astray as to the age of an infant."

"Has that nurse any of the clothes that were on the child," inquired Mrs. Peronett.

"She has a few articles of clothing, and they are all of a rare and costly description."

There was a long pause; and it was some time before either party spoke again. Lady Isabella did not see why so much violence was necessary in the matter, believing that her emotion proceeded from a very natural dislike to her son's forming such a connexion, though one or two of her observations did not tally with that supposition. Various changes passed over Mrs. Peronett's countenance, and Lady Isabella was so astonished at the excitement and agitation of the scene—the unaccountable emotion she manifested, that she was quite at a loss to frame those inquiries she earnestly desired to make. At last she said—

"If you fear there is any danger of Marian's returning the youthful passion with which she inspired your son, I think you may set your heart quite at rest. Henry was attentive to her at a time when his was the only voice that spoke to her with kindness—this

insured her warm and sincere gratitude—yet I am convinced she has no affection for him; and as to his love for her! why, we all know that it will pass to the next face, the beauty of which arrests his attention!"

"But it shall not pass!" exclaimed Mrs. Peronett, rising from the sofa on which she had been reclining—"It shall not pass—General Peronett may say and do as he pleases; but as for Henry, if he does not marry that girl as soon as he attains his majority, my curse shall hang about him like a shroud, and fester with him in his grave."

Lady Isabella was too astonished to reply. The idea came with painful strength upon her that Mrs. Peronett was really deranged: for she remembered her towering ambition; and that she should desire her son—the pride of his family—to marry a foundling, seemed to her little short of madness.

"What objection could this girl," continued Mrs. Peronett, "have to such a match? She can have formed no other attachment—she can have no higher ambition. Why, there are

hundreds, high-born and beautiful, that would glory in such a prospect. I must see her—but not to-day—I am not equal to it to-day—and reason with her—the General (the blind pride of that old man is most painful)—the General said that her carriage and manner was the most lofty he had ever looked on, and observed that Hafiz, his very dog, whom he believes to have an instinctive knowledge of the difference between low and gentle birth, paid her the most extraordinary attention. Did you ever hear such absurdity?"

"Not often," replied Lady Isabella, quietly, having been compelled by the remark to call to mind various extraordinary instances of similar absurdity in the conduct of the lady who made the observation.

"You understand clearly, Lady Isabel," persisted Mrs. Peronett, "that this girl—this Marian—is to marry Henry Peronett?"

"I understand nothing—how can I? It is perfectly impossible that I should. You all appear to me to have gone wild about a matter not of the least consequence. Henry Peronett

takes a boyish fancy to a pretty girl—his grandfather is outrageous at the idea of his heir marrying a foundling, and will not permit him even to breathe the air she breathes. This makes the youth consider himself a martyr, and fixes the half-ideal love ten times more firmly in his head — he writes to her —she will not receive his letter—the grandfather, instead of admiring her propriety, bristles up his pride, and swears that if he speaks to her—writes to her—thinks of her—he shall be disinherited."

"He cannot do that," said Mrs. Peronett, with exultation. "The property is firmly entailed on the heir-male."

"While his mother," continued Lady Isabella, "whose pride and ambition (you must forgive me) is as great as his grandfather's, declares the maiden shall marry him, whether she will or not, without assigning any reason for this extraordinary resolve! These contending opinions must cool down before anything reasonable can spring from so much chaos."

"I tell you, Lady Isabella," replied Mrs.

Peronett, fiercely, "she *shall* marry him. I have said it, and I'll adhere to it—nothing shall prevent it—and look that you oppose it not! If you do, you will regret it to the latest hour of your life. Bear with me only for a little time—I will explain hereafter—perhaps I will—but remember I make no promise. I must see this girl; but, as I said, not yet. She must learn to love me, if possible—if not to obey me! Do not look at me as if you thought me insane. We must agree on this point; and there again, if we are not careful, Godfrey Peronett may cross my purpose. I have heard him speak of her beauty as young men seldom speak where they are not prone to love; and if he thought it would annoy me, he would love her from pure malice."

"You do him injustice," said Lady Isabella.

"Why should you say I do him injustice?" exclaimed Mrs. Peronett, with more violence of tone and manner than she had as yet exhibited. "What proof have you that I do him injustice? Lady Isabel, you would do well to weigh your words. I repeat it!" she

said, stamping her foot violently on the ground, "What proof have you that I do him injustice?"

Lady Isabella Gascoigne had borne her wayward violence as long as she could, in consideration of the illness and irritation she was evidently suffering under; but she could support it no longer, and rising, said, "Mrs. Peronett, I must leave you. What I say, from a desire to calm and soothe your spirits, produces a contrary effect. My presence does you harm instead of good; and yet," she added, her kindliness rising in judgment against her indignation, "I cannot bear to leave you thus!"

"Oh, go—go—I pray you, go!" she replied. "Go, by all means—only, remember what I told you—if you, the self-constituted guardian of this Marian, attempt to oppose my wishes with regard to her—nay, if you do not forward them by every means in your power, depend upon it you will repent it—bitterly repent it—as long as you live! Go! I would be alone!"

She rose from her seat with the *hauteur* of an

autocrat, and Lady Isabella had hardly closed the door when she heard her bell violently pulled. She met her maid on the stairs.

"Your mistress is very ill. Can I see the General?"

Again the bell rang. Hardly replying to her inquiry, the woman passed Lady Isabella; but when she opened the door she screamed so loudly that her ladyship turned back, and much to her horror saw that Mrs. Peronett was sinking to the floor in strong convulsions. All was confusion in the house: servants running one way and another, so as to destroy each other's usefulness. The General, having commanded that every attention should be paid the lady, and medical assistance instantly procured, locked himself in his library, determined to indulge his reflections undisturbed, fully convinced that every earthly disappointment and misfortune was leagued against him. It is difficult for persons accustomed to perfect sway to believe in the possibility of disobedience, and the poor General had been completely overpowered by the events of the morning.

Half-a-dozen of the little medical men of the neighbourhood arrived nearly at the same time, for every servant had sent for his or her favourite practitioner; and then, indeed, arose "confusion worse confounded!" Lady Isabella was placed in a very painful position: Mrs. Peronett's own maid could not speak a word of English. The General sent his compliments, requesting that she would act for him, as he knew nothing about sickness, and his daughter-in-law hated his gentle housekeeper.

Mrs. Peronett had sunk from terrible convulsions into a state of torpor even more frightful. Lady Isabella did not like to commit her to the tender-mercies of most probably unskilful practitioners, though there was one respectable-looking old man, with a well-powdered head, who had constituted himself a great favourite of the Dean's, by curing two of the best pupils in his charity-school of the measles, and she permitted him to prescribe until the arrival of the more experienced doctor from London.

The little powdered man shook his little head, and said he thought the lady had got,

or was getting, a brain fever; an opinion which Doctor Darling, much to the little man's satisfaction and self-gratulation, afterwards confirmed. It is easy to imagine the poor General's consternation when this intelligence was communicated to him. He had a great dread of illness, and imagined that everything of the sort was contagious: he therefore lost no time in commanding that every one, and everything necessary for Mrs. Peronett's state, should be immediately procured; requested an interview with Lady Isabella; ordered his carriage; and then, without taking the least notice of his nephew, or honouring him with one word of reconciliation or adieu, he locked up his beloved room, stepped with Hafiz into one carriage, leaving his valet and housekeeper to follow in the other to town. General Peronett's absence from home was so unusual an occurrence, that a report was immediately spread all over the neighbourhood that a lady had gone mad at the Rosery, and driven Sir Henry away! This circumstance was attended with but one occurrence worth recording. Doctor

Darling remained more than an hour with the poor sufferer, whose violent emotions, from some unknown cause, had occasioned her disease; and having done all he could do, was waiting in the porch for his carriage to draw up, when a comely lady, of a delicate blond complexion, with round rosy cheeks and laughing blue eyes, stept mincingly up to him.

"Ah, Mrs. Fastlock!" he said, "how do you do?"

"Why, very well, thank God, Sir," she replied in a sanctified tone that ill accorded with her twinkling eyes, and roguish simper. "Very well; and so, I may say, are all my ladies, poor dear souls; they are a great deal better, and a great deal better off than they could be at home, Doctor."

"Oh, doubtless, doubtless!" he answered; "much better off, of course."

"Thank you, dear Sir," she said; "sorry to hear of the affliction here—sudden, was it not?—very sorry—but hope that if it should be altogether bad, you'll recommend my little establishment—two guineas a-week—the

greatest possible care taken of the poor dear souls—cheap! is it not, my dear Sir? or," she added, lowering her tone, confidentially, "if you could recommend me two at a time—two at a time—I'll take them for a guinea-and-a-half each!—isn't it cheap? Indeed, you'd say so," she continued, smirking in his face, "if you saw them eat!"

"Good day, Mrs. Fastlock," he replied, disgusted with her impudence; "good day!"

She laid her hand upon his arm, as he was stepping into the carriage.

"Doctor Darling: pray, if you meet with any idiots, recommend them to me! *capital* patients are idiots; they never recover!"

Doctor Darling had not far to go—only down the avenue to the Deanery. A desire to apologise to Lady Isabella for the delay that had taken place in his arrival, mingling with a wish to talk to real lords and ladies, who, he knew, were ever affable and pleasing.

## CHAPTER VI.

### AN EPISODE, WHICH MAY BE PASSED OVER.

"I ASSURE your ladyship," said Doctor Darling, smiling and bowing round, with a grace peculiarly his own—"I assure your ladyship I would have been here before, but for a case, an exceedingly distressing one, which I was compelled to attend."

"Oh, good patients must be attended to!" said Lady Isabella, smiling languidly, as if there was trouble in the effort, and finding it difficult to bring down her attention to what she thought must be doctors' "slip-slop."

"Not a good patient!" said the Doctor, emphatically—"Not a good patient, in the pecuniary sense of the word, my lady, though a very good man—by the way, I think he is known to your ladyship's brother, Lord Augustus Bingham."

The Dean, who had been reading, laid down

his book, took off his spectacles, and advanced. Lady Isabella introduced him. The Doctor bowed once to the Dean, and twice to the lord, and, to do him justice, could have performed the *coton* three different times to the venerable white-headed man who stood before him; for the Doctor had a kind heart, notwithstanding its being frothed over with the follies and fripperies of life.

"Who did you say knew me?" inquired Lord Augustus. "I did not hear the name."

"I did not mention it, my Lord; but the gentleman's name is Haughton—Frederick Haughton—my Lord."

Doctor Darling had "my lorded" the Dean twice in one sentence, which produced the idea of a smile upon the countenance of Lady Isabella.

"Frederick Haughton! To be sure, I know him well—very well—and his wife—his pretty little wife:—I know them both; but I have not seen any of his writings lately. I thought he was out of the country. Pray tell me news

of him. I hope it may be good—he is a fine, upright, single-hearted fellow. What of him?"

The Doctor looked very grave.

"Your Lordship, then, has not heard of his misfortunes?"

"I regret to learn he has been unfortunate; and I regret I did not hear of it before; but now I do learn it for the first time, I am not surprised. He was precisely the frank, generous, thoughtless person likely to add a unit to the hundreds of unfortunate literary men—not unfortunate from either idleness or want of principle, but still unfortunate; the sort of person to get other people out of trouble, and himself into it. A man not in the possession of a large fortune can seldom do the one without the other."

"Very true, my Lord; your Lordship is quite correct—quite, indeed."

Doctor Darling never said a lord was incorrect in his life, whatever he might think; and he had seen too much of human nature not to agree with the Dean in reality.

"Can you spare me a few moments," continued Lord Augustus, "to tell me all about Frederick Haughton? If he is in trouble, I must see him; so I will note down his address."

The Dean took out his pencil-case with the air of a man determined to hear all. Doctor Darling looked very grave, sat down opposite Lady Isabella, prepared to tell a story—a circumstance which always gave him a certain degree of pleasure, because he knew he did it well, and because he hoped that some good might come out of it to those he really felt for and regarded.

"I am afraid, my Lord, your young friend —I think your Lordship said you considered himy our friend?"—(Lord Augustus bowed)— "has been very thoughtless. He felt a good deal of gratitude towards certain persons who had been kind to him at his outset in life, and suffered his affairs to get entwined with theirs in such a manner, that when they were ruined he was drawn also to destruction. Would you believe it, my Lord? he had not a single busi-

never kept an account; made a by the exercise of his fine abilities; ought, I do believe, that money would increasing of itself; that one sovereign multiply ten, or, what is the same thing, as far as ten: he got entangled, in fact, in a net of many meshes, and could not extricate himself."

"Extricate himself?" repeated Lord Augustus—"I daresay not! Of all people in the world literary men ought to be the most careful to avoid entanglements; for the very nature of their occupations requires a total freedom from worldly thoughtfulness. The bringing down the mind from the self-created regions of a vivid imagination to the cold, uncomfortable business of every-day existence must be a trial which none but the imaginative can understand. The only way for such persons to keep straight with the world is to pay their bills weekly. I don't think a poet should have longer credit;" he added, smiling, "not because of his principles, but because of his practice. You said that Haughton could not

extricate himself; but he had friends, had he not? I am sure I have seen nearly all the distinguished people of the age at his house. What were they about when one so admired, so kind-hearted, became involved?"

"Haughton and his wife, my Lord, were too delicately minded to make a parade of their difficulties."

"That may be very true; but such things get abroad in spite of every effort to conceal them. They are but a nine days' wonder, to be sure; but still they are a wonder. I live out of the world: if I lived in it, I should have heard of this. Pray, Sir, go on."

"Every effort that man could make poor Haughton did. He offered to give up all to compound with his creditors, and to that all would have agreed, except the very men to whom, in point of the strictest conscience, he owed nothing; for the redeeming feature of his case was, that it was not a fictitious credit of his own he had laboured to support, but the fictitious credit of others. It is almost impossible to believe the affection with which his heart

clung to several things in his house—the treasures of the past—gifts bestowed by friends, or sent from distant lands, as tributes to his well-earned fame—and yet he would have yielded them willingly, if what he termed the disgrace of a public disclosure of his difficulties could have been prevented. His wife appeared to me hardly to feel anything except the misery he endured. She looked back, young though he was, upon his very boyhood, when the thoughtless speculation of one portion of his family, and the sectarian severity of another, compelled him to seek, which means to make, his fortune, with the elevated but slight distinction of a gentleman, as his only armour for battling with the world. It was all that was given him as a sword of attack, or a shield of defence. She had heard his trials during the fairy time of youth often and often told. It was for those trials, like a thousand other Desdemonas, she had loved him—loved him with the deep, upward-looking devotion that endears woman to man by the strongest earthly tie. She had married him when the world said she might

have done better, but when she believed she had done best."

"I remember," said Lord Augustus, "the very time—I cannot forget it. I had an opportunity of watching their progress for three or four years afterwards, and I never saw more industry or more happiness: they were climbing the hill together, and friends trooped around them."

"They were prosperous then," said Lady Isabella.

"They were," answered Doctor Darling—"they were, my Lady; but they had a great deal of trouble notwithstanding—they were both young and both enthusiastic—the notice they received placed them in a circle much richer than themselves, and almost insensibly they were drawn onward and onward—he, feeling his own power to create an income, and not dreaming that the power would decrease. They had shared days of toil and nights of anxiety together; and his devoted wife had seen him mount higher and higher, applauded and beloved; when suddenly, like a thunder-

bolt, at the very time she fancied their difficulties surmounted, their obstacles overcome—at the moment when she believed they should have enjoyed a little tranquillity, and rested in some degree from their labours—at that time—even while the first warning of the danger sounded in their ears—came the crash that, despite their efforts, overwhelmed them in its ruins."

"Poor things!—poor things!" exclaimed the good Dean. "Poor things!—but why did you not tell me, Sir?"

"You forget, my Lord," said the Doctor with a bow, "that till this day I had not the honour of your Lordship's acquaintance."

"Ay, true—I beg your pardon: go on."

"The usual consequences ensued; everything they possessed—the cherished offerings of many hearts—the gifts from many lands—were seized and sold."

"But his friends, Sir—his friends—did they all leave him?" exclaimed Lord Augustus, in a tone of surprise, which showed that he had never writhed beneath the frowns of fortune, or ac-

quired a knowledge of the changeableness of society by observing its workings. Doctor Darling might have said that his sympathy and attention had greatly supported Mr. Haughton, but of this he spoke not, for his mind was delicate as well as kind; but, smiling at the Dean's simplicity—the beautiful simplicity of a pure heart, pure with the snows of seventy winters on its head—he answered, "He imparted his troubles but to very few—those in whom he trusted, men of wisdom and experience."

"Men of wisdom and experience," said Lady Isabella, "are good to consult in a dilemma where only advice is wanted; but save me from men of wisdom and experience where heart and its supplies are needed. Commend me at such time to those whose feelings have never been crushed by the heaviness of experience, and whose wisdom has never been soiled or cankered by worldliness. His men of wisdom and experience did nothing for him, of course?"

"Oh, I beg your Ladyship's pardon," said Doctor Darling, who never blamed any one much; "they felt a great deal, a great deal in-

deed, for him—they pointed out all his carelessness, and his faults—showed how he might prevent such a thing ever occurring again—kept up his spirits, and, whenever they met, gave him excellent advice—most excellent advice! And, I believe, intended at first to have done more, and would, I think—I am sure they would, if they thought he would have taken it so deeply to heart. And then, my Lord, it is to be remembered he had no *actual* claim upon them, no relationship, nothing of that kind; and besides, they were *family-men*,—that makes a great difference."

"And was that all?" said the Dean, rising. "Did they leave the man who had relied on their friendship in the time of need?—did they permit his fair and honourable name to be turned over to the public, stamped by the printer's ink, and pointed at by those who had envied his uprising?—could they look in the agonised, yet patient, face of his wife, and when perhaps a little might have saved him ——"

The Dean paused—his feelings overpowered him; he had loved the young man whose

fate he deplored, and indignation impeded his utterance, for he had no idea of the guarded, and perhaps necessary cautions of men of business.

"Why, yes, a little—a few hundreds—would have done it—nothing—a bagatelle to rich men; but, the fact is, men like to take care of themselves, and the richer they get, the closer they grow—gold has a Mesmeric effect upon them, my Lord, it closes their hands: and Haughton had been very thoughtless; indeed, they fancied (one said so to me) that it would be a good lesson to him."

"Did they stand by and count the lashes inflicted by the whips of adversity for his benefit?" inquired Lady Isabella, calmly.

The Dean remained silent, but the expression of his countenance was not to be mistaken. Doctor Darling had been too much accustomed to behold a succession of characters, day after day, to notice their traits, unless they were very strongly marked: his habit was to jump at a conclusion without being troubled by comparisons; but he could

not look upon the noble countenance of the old clergyman without seeing that the world had left no stain upon his soul—that he found it difficult to comprehend the selfishness of mankind—and that, when proofs of its existence were thrust upon him, after his first feeling of horror had subsided, his mind became instantly filled with all manner of kindly projects to nullify its effects.

"Your Ladyship is severe," said the Doctor, in reply to her sarcasm; "but, notwithstanding all he said, no one thought his mind was so highly strung as to be incapable of resuming its tone. In a mercantile country such things are of daily, hourly occurrence; and knowing, as I do, that those gentlemen are excellent in the several relations of life—good husbands, good fathers, good citizens, and ——"

"Good friends?" put in Lady Isabel, in her usual tone.

"No, no:—but yes, my Lady, yes—upon consideration—certainly, upon consideration—good friends; that is, *good* friends *as the world goes*—as the world goes, my Lady; would do

really a great deal, if they knew how. There was an object to be attained — his freedom from encumbrance; there were two ways of accomplishing this — one, requiring their co-operation; the other, leaving them free."

"And their friend disgraced," again added the lady.

"Only in his own estimation, Lady Isabel. I could stake my life, I think, they would not have suffered him to be really disgraced; they believe still he will rise like a phœnix—they know his integrity and talent. I believe, from my soul, that their coldness—as he felt it—arose simply from their not understanding his character. And as those things are, as I said before, of hourly occurrence——"

"They may become familiar to mercantile men, to men who speculate too deeply and too dangerously for their own safety and the safety of others, and yet would be very angry if they were called dishonest, though every hour they risk property not their own," said Lady Isabella: "but things of that kind destroy altogether the tone of a sensitive mind to whom

refinements are absolute and positive necessaries; I do not mean luxuries—luxury is to a certain degree coarse, the leaf of the flower; I mean refinement, which is the flower's essence. No matter how bright and triumphant their hereafter may be, the shadow of the past will be with them in their mirth, in their prosperity, like the sword of Damocles, it will always be above them; with this difference, that, having *once* fallen, they know its power, and live in an undefined dread that it will fall again. Poor things! poor things!"

"Your Ladyship is quite right—I perfectly agree with you," said the Doctor. "It proves your knowledge of human nature. A mercantile man looks at everything in the way of merchandize—profit and loss—he is a sort of legalised gambler, stakes ships and bales of cotton, rail-road shares, debentures—no matter what the seed is, that grows money, upon the broad table-land of the world—and risks upon them, even as the gambler would upon the shaking of a die, or the turning of a card."

There spoke the Doctor as he really was—a keen observer; but that was not the proper tone of medical pliability, and he checked himself. What an advantage it would be if society in general, and young society in particular, could get at the real feelings and opinions of such men; but, as they get knowledge, they find out that the better part of worldly wisdom is discretion—silence, in fact—and it is only the very independent or the very brave who incur the hazard of clothing their thoughts in words.

The Doctor almost repented that he had spoken so freely, for he had excellent patients on Clapham Common and the other side of Oxford Street; had he been speaking to persons of inferior caste he would have qualified; as it was, he reverted to Mr. and Mrs. Haughton, and continued.

"Time passed slowly with them: one or two persons, neither exactly friends nor relatives, said they remembered the genius, but were exceedingly anxious not to disturb the retirement into which both prudence

and feeling had plunged them for a time. A man connected with literature, unless he be eminent in the highest degree, is soon forgotten; people in general remember far more about the delicacies they eat than the books they read, and I foresaw that Haughton was fast sinking into oblivion. I called upon him, and found him, as I expected, in slippered negligence; his hair undressed, his beard long, while she, poor thing! smiled in his face, then turned away to hide her tears. He received me with as much *hauteur* of manner as if he had been a Cardinal; so changed his aspect was, that I could hardly believe him the same man; he had grown testy and proud—he that used to be all gentleness, he almost seemed to think my visit an intrusion; talked incoherently of his now doing exactly as he pleased. 'When I was prosperous,' he said, 'I was enslaved by custom—the custom of seeing 'friends'—and yet, Sir, they were wise men —all—most wise men.'

"Then his gentle wife would try to change the subject, drawing harmony from the birds,

and bees, and flowers that surrounded their cottage lodging; try to wile his attention off his sorrows.

"'It would be all very well if he confessed that he was sorrow-laden, as I know he is,' said his wife to me, when at last I persuaded him to look me out a book I said I wanted, and he left the small room for the purpose;—' but he attempts a tone of exultation—gets all his feelings upon stilts, and then the reaction is desperate, he fancies that every eye reproaches him with his misfortunes, he thinks every one turns wilfully from him, and he is morose to those who do call;—it is marvellous, out of the number of those he served, how few remember it. Ordinary people, can never understand what he has gone through; and I am thankful for it: it is of all things the most cruel to be pitied by a common mind; he could never bear it.'

"I looked in her face, and I saw how deeply she had suffered. I spoke of hope, she shook her head.

"'He feels himself degraded,' she answered;

'while *that* feeling continues he can never be what he was; I never leave him, for in proportion to the elevated tone he assumes to you so will be his depression when you are gone. I do,' she added, 'pray very earnestly to God to support him, for if he does not,'—and the aspect of her countenance changed—I saw what she thought, poor thing! The evil has been greatly increased by anticipation, as indeed all evils are, let folks say what they will to the contrary."

"Well, Sir!" exclaimed Lord Augustus, unable longer to support the detail of misery, which he felt he had the power to relieve, and had already, in a mind where benevolence was ever active, pictured a cottage close by, as the residence of the sufferer; and the revision of se veral scores of sermons—which he had never bef ore thought of publishing—as the nominal occupation for which he meant to pay, at a rate which would have driven any publisher into a touching remonstrance against the impropriety, in the present "depressed" state of literature, of raising the market.

"Well, Sir, now for his address. A drive to town, or anywhere else, will do the horses good; you will like Mrs. Haughton, Isabella. We must not suffer him, on any account, to remain in this state of mind—it must be prevented."

"God bless you, my Lord, but it is too late!"

"What is too late?" inquired the Dean, withdrawing his hand from the bell he had touched—"what is too late?"

"Your generous aid, my Lord."

"Too late! what do you mean by 'too late?' Merciful heaven! he is not dead?"

"No, my Lord, not dead!"

"Well, then, you can cure him, Sir; you *shall* cure him."

"If his wife would do as she ought it might be possible—just possible, my Lord, but she will not part with him; day and night does she sit beside him, listening to the ravings of his insanity—which are rendered a thousand times more painful by the consciousness that at times returns only with sufficient brightness to heighten the gloom. There she is, apparently living without sleep, or air, or exercise, or al-

most food; existing, as if *she* were the soul, the active, living, thinking soul, which has been banished from that poor body, bestowing her *all* upon it—reserving for herself nothing but the hope that literally springs from her despair. They would not keep them in the lodging where I saw them at first, so she took a three-roomed cottage in a suburb,—a miserable detached thing, shaking in the blast, and only sheltered by green, unhealthy poplars; and there she waits upon and watches him; in his strongest fits her voice will soothe him; he was so seized this morning when I called—it was fearful; the person whom I had forced upon her, out of regard for her personal safety, could hardly keep him down; yet she took up her guitar—her poor eyes blinded with tears—her hand more nerveless and unstrung than the weak instrument. He did not heed the chords, but, when she sung—and sing she did, in that poor shattered cottage—she, whose voice used to be applauded to the echoes not long since, when she sung—his fingers ceased their fierce grapplings, his eyes by degrees returned to their

humanity, he lay quite still—perfectly still; at last a moisture sprang to his heated eye-balls—she singing, my Lord, all the time—tears burst on cheeks that were fever-flushed—still, my Lord, that suffering woman sung—at last he turned his gaze on her. God! how her hands trembled then! In another moment he called her by her name, 'Margaret.' She did not rush to him as a thoughtless woman would, but dropped the instrument, still singing softly, then crept towards him, crawled on the poor bed whereon he lay, and, the paroxysm over, the maniac sobbed and cried upon that faithful bosom that loved him better a thousand times than in the hours of his prosperity."

The Dean and Lady Isabella could not speak; the Doctor added, "I shall never forget it."

"And a little gold, a thing squandered in our fanciful speculations, our follies, our bazaars — daily, hourly, carelessly squandered, could have prevented this," said Lady Isabella when she was able to articulate.

"But insanity is curable!" exclaimed the Dean.

"Undoubtedly, my Lord; if all means were used that could be used, he would, I think, recover; but great care will be required."

"That shall be had, Sir."

"If he could be placed in a first-rate asylum, and his wife board therein, my Lord, so as to be both with him, and away from him, when necessary; but that would be so expensive, though if the case were known there would be an abundant subscription—yet——"

"No, need, Sir, their feelings have been sufficiently lacerated already—no need, Sir."

Again the Dean rang, and Lady Isabella rose and said, "My dear brother, I will go with you, I can steal away now for a little time."

These two excellent persons needed few words to express their intentions to each other: the lady added,

"And, Doctor, you will accompany us, will you not? After all things are arranged here, you will accompany us, and you will tell us

exactly what we ought to do in a medical point of view—my brother will do the rest."

Doctor Darling was indeed rejoiced; he always felt ten years younger after doing a kindness—I wish every one would adopt the same sort of renovator.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE LONELY LOVER.

Upon one of the benches under the shade of those noble trees that are inseparable from the remembrance of glorious old Oxford, and in one of its most retired walks, Henry Peronett was strolling in all the dignity of cap and gown. Oxford has been described a thousand times, and, as usual, every description differs according to the feelings of the describer. It is (notwithstanding all the littlenesses of *clique* introduction—notwithstanding all that has been said or sung against it by those whom prejudice or poverty excluded from a participation in its greatness, according to its old intention,—or its littleness, according to the abuses inseparable from all terrestrial institutions) a marvellous temple! dedicated by

our ancestors to that wondrous KNOWLEDGE which, according to some, is undergoing a new birth. Still, old Oxford is a glorious shrine whereat to worship—most glorious! Full of the noblest recollections; of hopes too for the future. The school of our nobility, intimating by its everlasting walls, and towers, and steeples, the durability of learning; the eternity of mind; out-topping our highest palaces —a splendid palace it is; solemn withal, and silent:—to my thinking, a laugh disturbs its harmony—I never could laugh when at Oxford.

It was evening, long broad shadows fell upon the grass, and the bells chimed out their solemn music, blending their tones in rich and holy union: the few of the insect world that had been allured into unseasonable sunshine had crept to their repose. The dew had not yet descended, but hung in thick misty vapours, heavy with a coming frost, amid the topmost branches of the tallest trees; and the golden rays of the setting sun were reflected from the giant and stained windows, breaking into rich lights, and forming traceries of gold and jewels

on the courts and pavements, that mocked the lapidary's skill.

The rooks had returned to their homes, and cawed over their adventures one to the other. Sometimes a loiterer from the community would rapidly cut through the air, suddenly wheel round, then drop upon his roost. A few of the collegians might be seen strolling through the grounds, talking over their bets rather than their books; though sometimes sentences, supposed to be too learned to be comprehended by female ears, would remind you that they were ambitious of "honours," and eager to obtain medals; but at this particular hour and season the walks are generally abandoned. The young men assemble in each others' rooms, visit the people of the good city, desert the dryads for the nymphs, and love other music than the rustling of the trees.

A very few students passed Henry, but he did not notice them, being perfectly absorbed in the contents of two letters which he read alternately.

"Peronett, my boy! are you going to ruralise

till the frosty-faced stars come out?" inquired a dapper young fellow whose cap hung very much on one side.

"I don't know," was the sulky reply.

"I say, Peronett, you are as dull as if you had nothing a-year in perspective, and were obliged to fag like poor me; there's a whole troop of fellows off to London—post it up—four horses, two out-riders—think of that!"

"I wish," answered Peronett, "I had nothing a-year in perspective, and then I might have some chance of having my own way."

"Having nothing in perspective, and retaining an idea of having your own way, you must be mad. Ah, Harry, you're a lucky dog; love-letters, eh? You wouldn't have so many, depend upon it, if you had *nothing* in perspective."

"Faith, they're not at all like love-letters," replied Henry. "I wish they were; but go away, Tom, do, that's a good fellow," he added as the youth, a noted tuft-hunter, endeavoured to insinuate his person at the other end of the seat he had sunk upon, to the manifest incon-

venience of Peronett's feet. "Go away, I want to be alone."

"Oh, very well; but is there anything I can do for you, be of service to you in any way? Come, and have a game of billiards, you know you always beat me; or *écarté?*"

"No, leave me alone, there," he added, looking him steadily in the face, for the youth had no inclination to desert his post. "Will you go?"

"Certainly, good evening, my dear fellow, and do look in at Lord Gubbin's—famous he is—capital claret, and a great genius."

"I hate geniuses: they are always laughing at you, or showing you up, or something," answered Peronett, peevishly; "but though I sha'n't go, that's no reason, you know, that you should not go."

"Capital, faith," said the bore, walking off in good time, for Peronett was sadly out of temper, and did not care what he said. While as he walked off he muttered to himself, "Cursed rude! If he had nothing in perspective, I wonder who would treat him with common civility?"

Henry Peronett again unfolded one of his letters; it was from Godfrey, and contained. besides his, Henry's own letter to Marian, and what is already known to the reader, with one or two observations and a declaration, that come what might he would never interfere again in such a matter. He took the letter, which Godfrey had been at considerable pains to write, in his very best hand upon the finest paper, and having torn it into the smallest atoms, he sprang from his seat and stamped it into the earth; he then threw himself back on the bench, perused a short but most fiery epistle from his grandfather, reproaching him all too violently for what *had* occurred, and taunting him with his broken promise, and commanding him on pain of his eternal displeasure not to come to London without his express permission. Then came a flowery message from Doctor Darling, smelling as all doctors' letters do of musk, acquainting him with his mother's sudden and severe illness, entreating him not to alarm himself, but requesting that he should be ready at a moment's warning, in case that if the illness continued he could come immediately to Twick-

enham. The young man pondered the contending statements over and over again; having made up his mind what course to pursue, and seeing his tutor approaching, he concealed Sir Henry's letter, and presented the grave-looking gentleman in black with Doctor Darling's communication. This was dexterously imagined and performed, but it did not answer the purpose he intended.

"Have you received no letter from Sir Henry?" inquired the tutor.

"I have just given you the letter I received," replied the young man, evading the truth.

The tutor saw the equivocation, and reproved it with a gentleness which prevented the discovery from being very galling, particularly to one whose sense of honour had been greatly blunted by his associates, but whose generous and affectionate disposition atoned for many faults.

"I, at all events, have heard from General Peronett," said the gentleman, "and his commands are decisive that you do not leave Oxford but by his orders."

Upon this Henry flew into a passion, called

his "Governor" an old brute, to keep him away from his mother at such a time (he had hardly ever mentioned her before), and concluded an oration, remarkable only for its intemperance, by the declaration that he would go where he pleased, and do as he pleased.

A discussion followed, in which his tutor so far prevailed, that Henry agreed to write to Godfrey, to his grandfather, and to Doctor Darling, and to wait the returning post before he so rashly disobeyed the orders of his eccentric and imperious relative.

Godfrey Peronett had been so deeply wounded by Sir Henry's treatment that he immediately quitted the Rosery, but day after day became more and more attached to the society of his venerable friend, the Dean, whose advice, it would appear, he constantly required, even as to the purchase of his law books and the fitting up of his chambers.

Lady Isabel remembered the request of Mrs. Peronett, who continued to suffer under the tortures of brain fever, and did not leave her to the care of menials—a nurse and her

own maid were in attendance ; still Lady Isabel would sit up with her at night. Lord Augustus caught a violent cold at the same time, from visiting the afflicted Haughtens, whom he had removed to his immediate neighbourhood, and saw daily. And the tender watchfulness of Marian prevented his missing Lady Isabel's society as he would otherwise have done.

" My dear brother," wrote his sister, Lady Bab, to him, on hearing of his indisposition, " I would have flown to you on the wings of that affection which has long subsisted between us (although I may say we live, and move, and have our being in different hemispheres), but Isabel's proud friend having got an affection of the brain, prevents the performance of what my tenderness dictates. I am convinced that there is a susceptibility and sympathy in the organization of those wonderful organs that communicate by some invisible but powerful agency the one with the other. I have written a highly interesting analysis of this subject, which I purpose to introduce into my pet book; but with this belief you will not be astonished

at my avoiding every possibility of contagion. What would the world do, if my brain were to become affected? As to Isabel she is safe enough, and so are you, my good brother; your nerves are not fine drawn *like mine!* By the way, Isabel has got a foundling; I saw so little of her when I stole a few moments to look in upon you that I hardly noticed that sort of creature, but some of the men who have been here call her a beauty; do tell Bell to write me a few notes of her history, it will keep her from falling asleep while she watches by Mrs. P., which I am told she does incessantly—more fool she—and with real names, and a little dressing up, it might make a nice article. Nothing but strong realities will do for my publisher; everything must be strongly seasoned, originality is *the* thing—nothing like it: if a woman writes a book on the domestic virtues—no one will read it—but let her do, or write something outrageous, everybody is thrown into extacies. *Entre nous,* women are permitted to be more *forte* than they used to be; *that* has come wonderfully into

fashion. A little coarseness gives, in my opinion, *great strength*, and is not at all difficult; it is considered brave. And now, and *entre nous* (but don't tell Isabel! It is marvellous how she has thrown away her continental advantages), that refinement and delicacy was a troublesome thing to *act* prettily at all times. Nothing like reality; things should be called by their right names; and as to private feelings being outraged, what humbug! Do not I as a philosopher know that it will be all the same in a hundred years? Feelings should sink in the great ocean of moral improvement! However, on this and many other points, I am happy to say the age is improving. There are some delightful French novels that open our eyes to a great many prejudices. One sweet author who mystifies so charmingly, that you would never imagine he knew the difference between right and wrong, except by his ever preferring what you, my dear sanctified brother, would call wrong. Sweet fellows! they are all soul and sentiment. Ah! how sublime is the philosophy of souls!

"I saw that monster, Sir Henry Peronett, yesterday at the Zoological gardens—he put me in mind it was my birth-day, and said I wore my years well. I told him no woman out of her teens liked to be put in mind of birth-days, and he grinned like a satyr! I wish he was gone to Twickenham: whenever I meet him he is sure to say something about 'old times.' You heard what Lord L—— said of me the other day, that I was the English Staël. It was prettily turned—kindly meant, but I have written more by three volumes than she did. I have indited this long letter for your amusement which is a great sacrifice; my time is so occupied I really must say *adio, mio caro! Vale,* therefore, my dear brother,

"*Croyez-moi toujours la vôtre,*

"B. Hesketh.

"The dear little dogs and Hesketh are quite well. Perhaps, as you cannot use the carriage just now, as, poor darlings! you are all ill, you would lend it me for a couple of days? I want to pay two or three visits where a glass

coach (considering who I am) would not be *comme il faut!*"

"Poor Barbara!" exclaimed her brother, "three imperfect specimens of language in one letter. Who would believe that woman had an immortal soul?"

The particular class of blue stockings of which Lady Barbara, in her day, was so decided a specimen, is passing away. The generality of females are better informed than they were thirty years ago; it is not that there are fewer *trout*, but there are fewer *minnows*; consequently "the trout" do not look so *very big*. Lady Barbara, towards the conclusion of her career, affected that *hardness* which unfortunately many clever women, now-a-days, mistake for strength. The affectation of sentiment and romance was foolish; the affectation of hard philosophy, in a woman, is worse than that. It is dangerous. Nature! that unerring philosopher! commanded different and separate occupations to the fairest portion of her creation, from what she allotted to the stronger; and whatever tends to destroy these obliga-

tions flies in the very face of that nature which it has become the fashion to talk about, and disobey. Women are capable of appreciating, and ought to be ready to exercise and understand the principles of all that is great and beautiful; they ought to be true patriots, firm friends, and honest members of society; *these* are general virtues: but there are others, especially their own, that must not be forgotten.

Doctor Darling, in reply to the letter he received, again assured young Peronett that if his mother grew worse he should hear from him immediately, and this, together with other considerations, compelled Henry to remain a few days longer at Oxford without making a decided effort to come to London. Mrs. Peronett's ravings were loud and almost incessant, broken at intervals by heavy fits of tears, after which she always obtained some repose. Lady Isabel was constant in her visits; and, moreover, her curiosity was strongly excited by several words she had dropped at intervals, which, if originating in anything like consciousness, were of great moment to those she loved. Lady

Isabel, too, felt herself as an authorized guardian to prevent others from hearing what might be injurious to the reputation of the unhappy woman. Her French maid knew nothing of the English language, and Lady Isabel confined the nurse's attention to the ante-room. Day by day her roused affections clung more closely round Marian, and for many years she had never spent such happy hours as those which she stole from Mrs. Peronett's sick room to pass with her brother, who, notwithstanding the depression occasioned by cold and low fever, could sit in his library listening to Marian's full soft tones, singing "Lord Ullin's daughter," or warbling forth the unadulterated melodies of Ireland as she had heard them from her nurse, or hearing the news which Godfrey brought every evening from town, or it might be listening to his manly voice as he read aloud some favourite author's prose or poetry.

This was indeed a treat to Marian; her ductile mind seized with avidity upon whatever was beautiful; like some goodly plant of rare excel-

lence which, despite the dust and want of culture that has stunted its growth as it struggled by the way-side—even as such would flourish when transplanted into a genial soil where the unpolluted dew would fall, the sun shine, and the gardener's skill direct and train its luxuriant branches; so did this maiden profit by all she heard, and having forgiven Godfrey the offence he had committed without intending to wound her feelings, she was well prepared to reap whatever advantage could be derived from the conversation of two men, whose minds were of the highest order and polish, while the age and experience of the one tempered the fervour and excitement of the other. The Dean had spent his life in the service of his fellow-creatures, so he looked on the past without that bitterness which is the canker of old age; and while he cautioned the young against expecting too much from human nature, also assured them that it would be their own faults if they experienced too little.

Marian's character became every day more developed and engaging. Totally freed from re-

straint, she felt she was surrounded by friends to whom she could look with affection and respect; and though the mention of General Peronett's name would still bring a cloud over her brow, and an angry flush to her cheek, still, each day was increasing her gentleness and expanding her intellect. Despite the luxury with which she was surrounded, her spirit yearned more ardently than ever to enter upon some plan whereby she could obtain that independence, which haunted her like a vision;—and her castles in the air were of magnificent fabric and glorious proportions. She had learnt too, within the space of a few days, to watch for Godfrey Peronett's coming, and if he did not come, to wonder why he remained away; he treated her now with the chivalrous respect which the knights of old bestowed upon the happy ladies of other times. She had risen in his esteem at the very moment when his sympathy was roused by the harshness she received from Sir Henry; moreover he blamed himself most bitterly for having given her pain, and all this

at a time when he firmly believed she was the most beautiful creature that ever opened her eyes on the blessed sun. But Godfrey's opinions will be best expressed by an extract from a letter he penned to a dear friend at Rome, an artist whose works have since become well known to the world.

" I wish you could see a young lady who is domesticated with, indeed I might say adopted by, our old friend, Lady Isabella Gascoigne. She is a subject, that if your pencil were faithful (and with your mind and talent it must be so), would rival Leonardo da Vinci's famous picture of his wife, Mona Lisa. If I attempted to describe her, you would say I was romancing. She has a mind of natural power, toned by pride, which latter sleeps gently as a lamb within her bosom, unless, as I saw it once, intentionally awoke and insulted — then, indeed, it rouses; and then, if you wanted to paint a ruffled swan, fierce, but yet graceful, she would be your model. Such changes, and such fire in her brilliant eyes; such a *tone* upon her cheeks!

"I hate those mere gentle girls without mind, or spirit, or feeling, to deepen the blush upon a pallid cheek; a fellow might as well think of living upon sweet cake, and sweet cream, and sweet strawberries, and all the sweets, which after all are *sure* to become sours, as going through life with a sleepy-headed beauty, whose roughest word would be 'an if it please you, Sir!' Not, my dear Saville, that I have any idea of taking any beauty to wife—heaven help me! I have quarrelled with the old General, and wived with the law, paid for an extra bottle of wine for the benefit of our four-in-hand mess at the Temple, and partaken twice of peas-soup, that would exclude me for ever from Tortoni's.

"No, I shall certainly not be in a condition to marry for these ten years to come; and by that time the flowers and passions of youth will have passed away, and left behind them those feelings which prompt rather briefless barristers of good families to make prudent matrimonial engagements; take unto themselves steady, respectable women, in half caps

half wigs, and yellow satin, whose skins and complexions are of the autumn tinge, and whose purses are heavy. But hang it, no, I am not come to that yet. There are reasons too why I must not think of this angel, even if I were rich; but you would have nothing to do with this, you would only have to paint her, Saville; for enjoying which privilege, that of looking on her unreproved, I should be half tempted to shoot you! Her features are capable of expressing the most exquisite tenderness, and I would almost take my old friend's, Lord Augustus Bingham's, infirmities to have her tend me as she tends him. Her gratitude and love towards her protectors is pure poetry; and, Saville, you should hear her sing: her voice gushes like the heart's life-blood, bright, quick, and strong in the very rush and fullness of melody. I persuaded her to teach me last night a simple ballad, the burthen of which was 'Gramachree ma Colleen-oge, ma Molly Asthore.' Now as you *read* it with the pure *Tuscan* in your ears it sounds harshly; but oh, to hear her *sing* it! Lady Isabel said to-day,

it was like taking a lesson in feeling to teach her anything, as she not only grasps information at once, but illustrates it in the happiest manner. As light draws forth the beauty of the diamond by striking upon it, so does she at once draw forth the brilliancy of whatever subject is proposed. Do not, my good friend, laugh as you used, and cry out 'A miracle!' It is only simple truth! Come to England and paint her. I swear to you it would be worth the trouble! You asked after Henry Peronett. He is at this moment desperately in love with this girl, but she will not hear of him. When shall you return? I am certain you would now make a figure, for——"

It is unnecessary to continue the epistle. Godfrey had some very peculiar notions touching art and artists, and he discussed their merits with a freedom which it is needless to repeat; for though it would gratify some it would distress others, so we will not introduce it to our readers.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A HINT AT A SECRET.

Lady Isabel had risen from her brother's side to return through the garden to the Rosery, when the footman announced that the cook wished to speak to her ladyship. Marian said that Katty "wanted to assist her in attending Mrs. Peronett that night, as the servants and nurse were all worn out with watching."

"Pray permit her, dear Lady Isabel," she added, "I can answer for her being an excellent nurse."

And accordingly Katty Macane followed her ladyship. Katty's importance was enhanced by this permission; she was never more happy than when others felt, and acknowledged her usefulness.

"If yer Ladyship will order the house into bed at once, my lady, dear, it 'ill give

them a beautiful night's rest, Madam, and make them as fresh as May cowslips by the morning: in truth, the craythurs look pale and worn; they're not used to campaigning. I'll read the labels beautiful on the bottles, and if yer dear Ladyship have any misthrust as to my giving her these great loads of physic properly, as I ought—why, my Lady, if you'll just lay your darlint head gently there on that sofa I'll call ye as thrue as time to the very minute she ought to take them! Poor dear Lady, she's too worn down with the fever to take much watching: it 'ill lave her soon, I'll go bail, my Lady; but whether for good or ill—the Lord himself He knows!"

And she shaded the lamp with her hand, so that Lady Isabel could look steadily on the worn and haggard features of Mrs. Peronett. Her long hair had been shaven from the crown, and while sleeping she moaned so heavily that Lady Isabel thought she had never looked upon anything which gave her so perfect an idea of the sufferings that mental agony entails upon the frail temple of clay which mind inhabits.

The lamp was replaced, and all the arrangements of the sick room dexterously performed by Katty, when, to Lady Isabel's surprise, the graceful figure of Marian stole through the shadows of the room, and in another moment she was seated by the side of her friend's couch.

"Lord Augustus is gone to bed better than usual. I have been singing all his pains away," she whispered; "and now I am come here to watch with you; Lord Augustus said I might —I am strong enough to do so now."

Lady Isabel thought within herself how little Marian would have been inclined to volunteer her services, had she imagined the arrangement Mrs. Peronett had formed for her disposal. The night waned on as it always does in a sick room. The invalid awoke frequently, and was as delirious, though not as violent, as ever. Towards morning they gave her a composing draught which enforced repose; and then Lady Isabel followed Katty's advice, and endeavoured to sleep on the sofa in the ante-room. Marian nestled on some

cushions by her side, and slumbers warm and genial closed her eyelids, but Lady Isabel could not sleep. The cold unsatisfactory beams of morning were mingling with the paling lamp-light. She rose from the couch, and looked through the curtained door into Mrs. Peronett's room. Katty Macane was certainly wide awake, seated so that she could observe every movement made by her patient. She was however at that moment employed in examining the mark on a cambric handkerchief which she held close to the lamp. Lady Isabel stood by her side before the nurse perceived that she had entered the apartment, and then she dropped the handkerchief with the suppressed ejaculation of

"Lord save us, my Lady! Sure you frightened the life out of me!"

"What were you examining, Katty?" whispered Lady Isabel.

"This mark, my Lady, is it 'Marian,' if you please, Madam?"

"Yes, Mrs. Peronett's name," replied Lady Isabel.

"Is her name really Marian?" said Katty, taking off her spectacles and looking earnestly at Lady Isabel.

"Yes, it is."

"See that now, and it not a common name, my Lady!"

"No, not at all a common one."

"And this mark above the name, my Lady, this in the embroidery: what is it at all?"

"That? Oh, that is a crest!"

If any one but Lady Isabel had supposed that she did not know what a crest was, Katty's crest would have been up, but she murmured in all humility,—

"I know it's a crest, my Lady, thank your Ladyship, but it's not that, it's rather washed out, and it's glad I'd be to know what bird or animal it is?"

"The crest, Katty. is an eagle on an arrow."

"That wasn't the dear Captain's right crest, was it, my Lady, before he picked up the new name to plase the ould General, and got a grand property, was it?"

"No, Katty, it was not."

"I thought it could not be," muttered Katty. "Well, it's mighty wonderful intirely!"

"What is wonderful, Katty?"

"I ax yer Ladyship's pardon — the sleep, my Lady—she's sleeping as soft as an angel. I'm thinking it's on the turn, my Lady; everything has a turn in this world—turn up and turn down, turn out and turn in. Yer Ladyship's sure it's an aigle?"

"Quite certain—why?"

"Curosity, my Lady; it's a woman's wakeness—we're all too curos: see the bite Eve took out of the apple just to see what was on the inside—what mischief that did us; and what was it all but curosity? I'll ax no more questions, my Lady!"

As the morning advanced Marian stole through the garden into the house of sickness, and insisted on keeping watch herself. She did not like Mrs. Peronett, though she felt drawn towards her as the mother of him who had, as she never failed to remember, been kind to her in her trouble: now her desire was to assist Lady Isabel.

"Let her do it, my Lady," said Katty. "Pray let her—I've a sort of a raison; and it's always good, to my thinking, to let the young see what sickness is; it makes them kind and gentle, and tinder-like—feeling, as a body may say for themselves and others; pray let her do it."

Marian, accordingly, took the watcher's post; but she had not retained it more than half-an-hour when Mrs. Peronett awoke: her eyes had lost their wildness, and, though she was evidently more collected than she had been since her illness, there was weakness of the most painful kind in the expression of her attenuated features.

"Give me a drink," she said at last; and Marian moistened her parched lips with liquid. "It is fresh and cool: bless you!" she added when she had finished—"Bless you!"

And Marian knew not why, but those two simple words, pronounced in all the feebleness of illness by a woman whom she had regarded with positive terror until they were spoken, became to her words of intense interest.

Mrs. Peronett's friends and attendants were stimulated to fresh exertions by the information that her reason had returned, like a worn-out traveller, faint and weary, to its home: but her restlessness increased, notwithstanding; and she showed such a decided preference for Marian, that she refused to take her medicine from any other hand. Her servants were not surprised at this caprice, as she was in the habit of yielding to such fancies; but nurse Macane, during the entire of that day, interspersed the directions to her kitchen-maid with sundry exclamations of "See that now!"—"Well, I'm fairly bothered!"—"Time 'ill tell!"—"Och, my grief!"—"It's a long lane that has no turning!"—"Who'd ha' thought it!"—"God direct me!"—"The nearer the heel the worse the ravel!"—"Oh, the unsarchable mysteries of the Almighty!" Indeed, the kitchen-maid—stumpy and red-elbowed as a Welsh woman—believed that Mrs. Peronett's fever had, in another shape, visited "cook;" and, between them both, Lord Augustus, for the first time since Katty's

kitchen sovereignty, sat down to an ill-dressed dinner.

"My dear Isabel," said Lord Augustus to his sister, "you seem restless and uneasy; what has occurred to make you so?—you say Mrs. Peronett is better."

"Yes; that is to say, the fever is gone, and the doctors say she is doing well: yet the nervousness and lassitude that have succeeded are even more distressing than her violent ravings. She must think herself very ill, for she has desired Henry to be written for immediately."

"Henry!" repeated Godfrey, who had just laid a sweet ballad on the piano, and expressed his regret that Marian was not there to sing it. —"Why what can she want with Henry—what good can Henry possibly do her?—first time in her life she ever expressed the least desire to see him."

"So much the better," said the good Dean: "it is a good sign when the affections turn into their proper channel. I would feign hope that this illness will chasten, if not subdue, her pride; indeed, I rather incline to the opinion

that we are so harmoniously constructed that our faults only require correct chastening to become virtues."

"That woman," said Godfrey, pettishly—for, truth to tell, he was annoyed at Marian's absence, and almost alarmed to find how much he felt that absence, and more than annoyed at the prospect of Henry's coming into such close neighbourhood with her—"That woman never had a virtue, Sir!"

"My dear Godfrey," replied his Lordship, "it is really painful to hear how you sweep away a character in a sentence. You will never make a lawyer."

"My dear Lord, you show that I shall make an excellent one."

"How so?—You must be just," retorted the Dean, whose pure and primitive notions of law were founded upon the Law and the Gospel—"You must be just, my dear boy. But you are filled with prejudice against this lady: now be as much prejudiced in *favour* of people as you please, but beware how you are lightly prejudiced against them."

"My dear Sir——"

"Have the goodness to listen: prejudice is the more dangerous, because it has the unfortunate ability of accommodating itself to all the possible varieties of the human mind!—like the spider, it makes everywhere a home. Some one of our glorious old fellows—South, or Taylor, or Fuller, or Bishop Hall—has it somewhere, that let the mind be as naked as the walls of an empty and forsaken tenement, gloomy as a dungeon, or ornamented with the richest abilities of thinking—let it be hot, cold, dark, or light, lonely or inhabited—still prejudice, if undisturbed, will fill it with cobwebs, and live, like the spider, where there seemed nothing to live upon."

"Well, Lord Augustus, if it please you, I will declare Mrs. Peronett is the most amiable of her sex."

"My dear boy," said the venerable Dean, inclining his beautiful white head a little on one side,—"I am growing deaf, that is the truth: what did you say?"

Godfrey repeated the sentence.

"No, no; she never was amiable: but this interest for her son shows that she has a woman's heart in her bosom after all."

"I wish she had chosen some other time to prove it," muttered the young man.

"What did you say, Godfrey?"

"It was very warm in town to-day, my Lord."

"Well, I dare say it was," replied the Dean, while Lady Isabel shook her head at Godfrey, "very warm, and I am glad of it, I like warm weather, not so much for my own sake as for the sake of the artisan, and the poor room-keeper, and the mother who looks to the sun's influence to revive her sick child, and the pleasure it gives to see the old people of the alms-houses sitting in its beams, and the flowers and fragrance it draws forth.

"I love the cottage gardens in sunny weather, rich in what are called common flowers; I delight in the perfume of the new-mown hay, the common wallflower, and the wood violet; and enjoy the happy voices of the peasants at their noon-day meal, ringing right merry music

through the meadows of my own beloved Twickenham. I love a sunny Sabbath, the sunshine rests so calmly on the worm-eaten pews, telling of brightness hereafter to those who read it so. And the river, the glorious, unequalled river!—the Silver Thames!—bears the beams of royal light so joyfully upon its surface, proud of its similarity, in hue and colour, to the heavens it reflects.

"I never," added the good man, whose enthusiasm had not been dulled by time—"I never see the sun shining that it does not remind me of the blessings bestowed by the Son of Righteousness upon the world. But I am prosing. Oh dear! We prose as we grow old."

"I delight in such prosing," said his sister; "it does one good to think that there are bright, and pure, and happy things in nature which have nothing to do with art, and to think that they do not wear out; and as to Godfrey, I am sure he did not think it prosing, did you, Godfrey?"

"Prose," he replied, abstractedly, "oh, no."

"I was certain of it, for you did not hear one word my brother said."

"My dear Lady Isabel!"

"My dear Godfrey Peronett!"

"Well, I beg Lord Augustus's pardon. I will really attend if he will say it over again."

"No, that he cannot do," said Lady Isabel, "for the brightness I see has passed from his brow, and he is thinking of something more serious than flowers, and streams, and sunshine."

After this little scene, it so happened that all the three fell into a reverie; it might, or it might not be about the same thing, or the same person, but it lasted so long, and each became so absorbed, that the announcement of no greater personage than Doctor Darling caused a sensation, as if some extraordinary event had occurred. His business was with Lady Isabel; and after saying how well Mrs. Peronett was going on, and that change of air would be necessary, which would enable the General to return, an event he was anxious about, he stated that Mrs. Cavendish Jones

—no longer Mrs. Cavendish Trufit, for Trufit had been obliged to leave England, as they already knew, and left it accompanied by his good and forgiving wife—was really dying, and had expressed an earnest desire to see Marian. "I said I would mention it," said the Doctor, "and would have urged it strongly upon our young friend, but that I do not think it can be of any advantage to her just now, for the poor woman's circumstances are so reduced that she has left her house, and is dying in a lodging; had she been affluent, it would have been well for the young lady to have been with her—desirable, no doubt, but, as it is, why all I can say is, that she must use the discretion your Ladyship will be good enough to suggest; and if she does not go, why I will make the best apology I can; the poor woman cannot last very long."

Lady Isabel said, "that Marian should judge for herself," and she was instantly summoned from Mrs. Peronett's bedside.

"Mrs. Cavendish Jones, my dear," began Lady Isabel, "is very ill, so ill that Doctor

Darling does not expect her to recover." Marian was sorry—very sorry. "And she has expressed an anxious wish to see you, my dear."

"Indeed, but how can I leave Mrs. Peronett, Madam?"

"Exactly so," said Doctor Darling, "it is only the whim of a foolish dying woman, who, as I explained to Lady Isabel, could do you *no* good."

"Sir!" exclaimed Marian.

"Trufit's schemes and extravagance have brought her to the verge almost of beggary, and no one pities her: it was the fault of her own absurdity—she is quite alone, and is totally deserted by every one."

"Not by me," said the generous girl, and tears sprung to her eyes; "not by me in this hour of need! Oh, no! Take me to her this instant, Doctor Darling. Dear Lady Isabel—Lord Augustus, you will surely let me go?—Mrs. Peronett is better — besides she has friends and luxuries—I will go this instant!"

"Marian," said Lady Isabel, longing to try her, yet anxious that she might stand the test;

"my dear Marian, do remember how ill you were treated by this woman."

"And in my early days of childhood how well," she answered, "how very kindly; imperfect as is my knowledge, I should not know the tithe I do know had it not been for her; had it not been for the vain christening I should not have known you."

"You will be sadly uncomfortable," persisted Lady Isabel.

"I should be more so if she had not sheltered me when she did! Poor forlorn woman—how wretched she must be—she, who could not bear to be alone—to be alone on a dying bed! Let me go at once; Mrs. Peronett sleeps now; you, dear Lady Isabel, will tell her where and why I am gone!"

"But, Marian——"

"Nay, nay, Isabel," interrupted the Dean, warmly, "it is not right, you are but proving the girl—it is not right; though *she* is——it is wrong to stir the good seed in springing, lest it should be uprooted. Go, my dear, and go at once, Doctor Darling will leave you

there; it will be a consolation, and that of the best kind, to the dying woman to have you near her. Shall your nurse go too?"

"No, Sir, she never liked her; and, good as Nurse is, she might say something that would hurt her feelings."

"Ay, go," added the good man, "and take this with you." He rose, and taking a small bible off the table placed it in her hands. "No watcher by the bed of sickness should be without this precious volume—a word in season, when the heart is softened, is indeed a treasure; take it, and God bless you!"

In a few moments Godfrey Peronett, who had witnessed this scene with a beating heart, handed Marian into the carriage. It is recorded that while he murmured "God bless you,"—doubtless in imitation of the good Dean's benison,—he pressed Marian's hand with right (it is supposed) *brotherly* tenderness,—nay, it is not quite certain that he did not kiss it!

He returned to the library, found that Lady Isabel had gone to the patient next door, and

was soon engaged at a hit at backgammon with the Dean. The only circumstances worth recording were—that he played sixes as aces, and attempted to take his opponent up where there was no blot; and, while the Dean was putting on his spectacles to watch the result of the next throw, abruptly inquired how much he (Lord Augustus) "thought a man—a married man — could live comfortably and respectably on in England?"

Lord Augustus, having seen clearly that the throw was size deuce, in his turn asked, "If he meant with a family?"

Upon which Godfrey laughed, sighed, and said, "Hang it! no, Sir, I never thought of a family."

"Many young men do not, Peronett, before marriage, who are obliged to do so after it."

## CHAPTER IX.

### A DYING BED.

An untidy girl, whose collar was crookedly put on, and whose frock was open in defiance of two or three unmatched hooks-and-eyes that grinned at each other across a torn petticoat, opened the door to Doctor Darling; her cap, too small to cover her head, either before or behind, was trimmed with gaudy ribband and surmounted her head, from which some greasy curls depended, fastened back with two horn combs. Her face bore no tokens of having been irritated by frequent washings—her habiliments altogether had a lodging-house look,—and she carried about her sufficient evidence of belonging to the class of hard-worked and slatternly individuals, who, in return for small wages and hard usage, "do" for all the lodgers in a ten-roomed house. She held a dim, flat, tin candlestick in her hand, in which gleamed a

yellow gawky candle, swaying, according to the movements of its possessor, from right to left, and left to right.

"Mrs. Jones better to night, eh?" demanded Darling, wasting his bland smile, which had become part of his countenance, on the ill-tempered girl.

"I don't know whether she be or no, Sir, but this I do know, she be full of fancies, and mortal cross; she had such lovely gruel only warmed up three times, and she vowed it warn't fresh—if Missus dosn't get a nurse I won't stop, that's all—for I never engaged to 'do' for sick people."

"Do your best and you shall be paid for it," whispered Marian, who had been too long in distress not to know the omnipotence of gold.

The girl made a movement, intended as a curtsy, and opened the chamber-door. Marian's heart beat against her bosom; the Doctor went in, and when she heard the thin, low, querulous voice of the once rich and vain and pampered woman, she could not have spoken had it been to save her life. A

single candle of the same description as that which was borne by the servant was placed in one of those gloomy caverns of light, called "a shade," where the holes made in the tin reflect a sort of shadow on the walls and ceiling resembling the bars of a jail; even as the door stood open a close, confined smell escaped. There were no pastiles, as of old, wreathing her chamber in perfume; no flaçons of scents ready to bathe the room with sweetness; all was neglected, dirty, and cheerless: while the voice of Mrs. Jones—for she had returned to her old name—wailed forth her complaints in the most trembling and piteous tones.

Lady Isabel had placed her purse in Marian's hand, desiring that she would appropriate its contents to procure comforts for the deserted woman; and Marian called the Doctor's footman, and desired him to purchase a few of those luxuries which she remembered Mrs. Jones used to class amongst the necessaries of life. She returned to the chamber-door just as Doctor Darling summoned her to enter.

The death-bed of a vain woman is an excel-

lent lesson to vanity. Marian shuddered when she saw the sharp, attenuated features of her first protector, shadowed by the torn and yellow lace and faded ribband, which her almost helpless fingers had placed fantastically over the remnants of her yellow ringlets, for she had not sufficient courage to suffer even her Doctor to look upon her grey hair. The coverlet bore but few vestiges of its former whiteness; and the soiled and tumbled pillows, upon which she heaved and moaned, were hard and comfortless; her respiration was most painful, and she was obliged to pause at every third word for breath.

"Dear me, Marian," she said, after the fall of a few natural tears—"Dear me, child, how you are grown, and how handsome you are! And—and what lovely lace that is, I never did see anything so sweet. Oh, there are at least three yards—in—in that tucker! My!—— well it was kind of you to come—I thought you would, and, oh, do give me those grapes—how fresh they are, and some eau de Cologne! Ah! how sweet it is. And a wax taper, why

you have got everything! Pray light it at once, and take away that horrid mutton candle —how I hate mutton candles! I knew all along it was the smell of that candle that made me so very ill, injured my breathing—I was quite assured of it; I told the Doctor so, and he said perhaps so, but he did not offer me any others."

After partaking of the fruit and inhaling the fragrance of the perfumes, she was really revived, and then Marian, with a golden key, unlocked the heart of the mistress of the house, and procured various comforts, to the sick lodger hitherto unknown; and, by the help of a few fresh flowers and a little arrangement, made the small room look very different from what it had done. Nothing, however, could tranquillize the woman, who had passed her life without one laudable ambition—without one high or holy aspiration after what was either good or great; the memory of her own wrongs, inflicted as they had been by the object of her absurd fancy, obliterated the memory of the injuries her caprice had visited upon others; and

the disease that was pressing her into the grave, was enough of itself to render its victim irritable and restless. It would be difficult to imagine a greater moral triumph than a weak and delicate woman watching the approach of death with an unquailing eye,—acknowledging the full value of those gifts bestowed by the rich and beautiful world; not depreciating by word or deed the blessings lent by the Almighty to cheer our earthly pilgrimage, and yet resigning her spirit in the fulness of her faith to him who gave it. There have been many such heroines, but such death-beds are only the results of a christian life!

The triumph, however, of this death-bed was not to the departing, but to the young watcher, who sat hour after hour in patient endurance of the frivolity and folly which, like a wreath of gaudy, but scentless flowers, garlanding a skull, made the prospect of the grave more hideous. The object upon which the dying woman's attention was riveted was the tucker which Marian wore, and had it been

possible to secure salvation to her immortal soul, she could not have manifested more delight when Marian took it off her dress, and commenced trimming a cap with it for her. Days and nights passed, and each day and each night proved that the miserable woman was drawing nearer to her end, yet shrinking farther and farther from it.

"No, no, I will not hear the bible read—it is *so* dull; when I get better, I will go to church; but I want something to raise my spirits. I will go to law, too, with that lawyer who let that horrid Trufit spend my money—after all he was not my husband—so what right had he to do it? I am better to-day—I know I am—my complexion is better—I wear better. That horrid Miss Womble made a fortune by hard dumplings, and I lost mine by a swindler.

"It was not kind of you, Marian, to hire a nurse, you could have done what little I wanted for me,—I have met with a great deal of ingratitude; I hate ugly nurses—no wonder—

and dark people—I hate dark people. Put that bible off the table, it makes it look like a sick room."

Poor Marian could only answer by her sighs, while Mrs. Jones expended almost her last breath in such complaints.

"My dearest Marian," wrote Lady Isabel, "it is almost wicked to say it, but I long to hear that you are nearly released from your attendance. The noble manner in which you have, despite Mrs. Peronett's entreaties and your nurse's remonstrance, devoted yourself so zealously to this labour, has endeared you to us all. The Dean, ever ready to do good, will comply with your request, and visit this benighted woman, who is, you say, longing to receive him, not because he is a clergyman, but because he is a lord! However, perhaps, he may be able to open her eyes. Think of Mrs. Peronett's leaving the Rosery, and requesting a room here. The General has returned almost suffocated with wrath and London smoke; but I hope to see you soon, dearest! Katty looks broken-hearted, and says—if it was a rale

gentlewoman you were attending, she should not care!"

"Pray read me that letter," murmured Mrs. Jones, when Marian had got thus far, "I like to hear letters; anything about me?"

Marian told her of Lord Augustus's proposed visit, and the announcement threw her into a fever of anxiety. "Put on my best cap, child, for his Lordship; now bring me the glass—how crooked it is—*how ill it makes me look!* To think of those brutes seizing and selling my love of a cheval glass—what a fright it makes me—a little oil to these curls, you might have papered them last night—I cannot lift my hand to my head—and you have put on my cap so badly! Do I look better now?"

Marian could not reply, her eyes overflowed: Doctor Darling had told her the miserable woman could not live twenty-four hours longer; yet her whole anxiety was—"*how she looked.*"

"You are greatly improved in your temper, Marian, I will say, but yet you are a poor companion for the sick—you are so dull. Put

the Bible there on the clean napkin,—perhaps his Lordship may want it. Have you told the people of the house that his Lordship is coming? Do! It will make them respectful. Pull the pillows up;—and if you were to put a rose or so in the border of my cap——"

Marian could not restrain her feelings. "Leave—oh leave these vanities, my dear, dear Madam, and think of what is better—of what is to come!" she exclaimed in an agony of intense feeling.

"Of what is better!—of what is to come?" she repeated as rapidly as her agonizing cough permitted: "why, to hear you talk, Marian, one would think I was dying!"

Marian made no reply, but her silent tears offended the really dying woman.

"There, go—go," she continued, "and wait for his Lordship—that is a carriage! Before you go give me that little red box—there is a better glass in the lid—you sink my spirits! Marian, go.—Just raise me up a little more—and mind how you receive his Lordship."

Marian looked from the window, and saw

Lord Augustus's carriage stop: it needed no second bidding to send her flying down the stairs, tears still wet upon her cheek; nor did she permit other hand than her own to open the door.

"I am so happy!" she exclaimed, the quick feelings of youth overpowering her sorrow.

"Thank heaven for it!" was the reply, not from Lord Augustus Bingham, but from Godfrey Peronett.

Marian blushed and faltered, while Lord Augustus slowly descended from his carriage.

"I felt it an age since I saw you," whispered Godfrey, as he returned to the carriage to wait for his venerable friend.

The suddenness of this interview, let it proceed from what cause it would, confused the current of Marian's thoughts, and, as she sat, with the Dean and Godfrey in the small back parlour, which the landlady's extreme politeness to "my Lord" had offered, thinking she had much to say to him before proceeding to the sick room, she could not find words for a single thought. At last it occurred to her that she had better

announce the arrival, and she crept on tip-toe into the chamber for the purpose. Mrs. Jones was supported as she had left her, and Marian's first look convinced her that she had, despite her weakness, succeeded in applying a quantity of rouge to her cheek. The red glared frightfully upon the shrunk and yellow skin. Marian, horrified at this new and disgusting proof of the wretched woman's vanity, sprang to the bed, but she saw that her hands were clenched, her features distorted, her eyes glazed and fixed — she was dead! Marian screamed—the nurse entered from the adjoining room. The poor victim of folly had departed for another world grappling the rouge-pot between her fingers.

## CHAPTER X.

### A CLOUDY DAY CLEARING UP.

WHILE Marian watched and waited at the bed-side of the vain woman, whose end was characteristic of her life, Henry Peronett, despite his uncle's commands, visited his mother. He made what he called "a dash" to do so, but the visit proved unsatisfactory to both. Mrs. Peronett was so evidently anxious for him to renew his acquaintance with Lady Isabel's charge—Lady Isabel was so averse to such a proceeding—and the General, upon hearing of his arrival, fulminated such epistles on the event —that the lad was torn to pieces by conflicting opinions and conflicting advice. Henry thought Marian's absence a sufficient annoyance; and, when he spoke to Godfrey, Godfrey declined giving his opinion, almost with the air of a lawyer who is consulted without receiving a retaining fee. This state of mutual incon-

venience continued only two days, for on the evening of the second the General himself arrived at the Rosery, and assumed the air of a man upon whom had been heaped all the troubles and insults of a century. This manner, in a person who never in the whole course of his life experienced a positive contradiction, was exceedingly amusing to Lady Isabel, who, of course, was the peace-maker between the General, his daughter-in-law, and grandson; and it was with the greatest difficulty she managed to maintain a grave and proper demeanour.

"It is not enough, Lady Isabel!" said the General—"it is not enough, Madam, that I have been forced to abandon my own house to the dominion of a half-mad woman and her monkeyfied maid,—a foreigner, Lady Isabel, a born foe to the laws and institutions of my country. A dirty foreigner, Madam!—the dust shakes out of her as she goes up and down the stairs; I shall never get the house clean again —never, Lady Isabel: one would think the woman was a sand-bag."

Lady Isabel thought how the neat, finikin, waiting-maid would look if she heard this.

"But as to my daughter-in-law, she could not help getting ill, I suppose, though I don't see why she should have done so just at the time her income was increased. Women generally get well when they obtain what they want, and she has been always craving more money—I don't believe in the existence of this sort of illness."

"My dear General!"

"Yes, I know what you would say, but you must excuse me, I don't believe a word of it—not a syllable. She is too much for us both: that woman's head is nothing more nor less than an infernal machine; she got ill to plague me—to force me from my home into London at this season of the year, when people eat and breathe dirt;—seven pails of water daily does it take me to purify this flesh—seven! and yet I shall never be clean again. Hafiz, too, poor fellow! he has got inflammation in his eyes from frequent washings—just what she would desire; but this is not the worst.—— Now do not in-

terrupt me, Lady Isabel; I know I am a poor, feeble, suffering, weak old man, whom no one cares about—no one thinks about;—but I see you were going to say that the doctors said she was ill—so they did, I dare say: great fools they would be, if a person declares he is ill, not to act as if they believed it! Lady Isabel, she got ill on purpose to annoy me and dirty the house! Is it not plain? I know—I have heard—that that woman dared to put herself in opposition to my views—she! so ambitious—so uplifted! Would she ever have taken that girl by the hand, but to mortify me? With you the case is different—you wanted a pet, and instead of a monkey you took a maid—that was all: besides, the girl is a nice girl, has a fine eye, and the bearing of a gentlewoman; but I tell you, unless to serve her ambition, Mrs. Peronett has not the heart to throw a crumb to a sparrow—a shilling to an old soldier; yet she gets her son down here to meet this girl."

But Lady Isabel now would be heard, and she compelled the old General to listen while

she informed him briefly and quietly that Henry had never seen Marian—that Marian was away; and represented in feeling and forcible language the cruelty of keeping a son separated from his mother at the very time when it was not likely she could have recovered. This, of course, Sir Godfrey did not believe: he said that Mrs. Peronett got ill to annoy him—that she remained ill to annoy him—and sent for her son, *despite his commands,* to drive him mad. Then casting away altogether the weak complaining tone, so completely unlike himself, he took up his natural character, and ordered Henry back to college, while his mother commanded him to remain. But Lady Isabel had sufficient influence to prevail on Mrs. Peronett to yield for the first time in her life, and poor Henry drove off, within two hours after his grandfather's return, like a great boy who had been promised a cake, but instead of the cake had received a whipping —the General accompanying him himself the first stage, and then returning full of wrath and perplexity to his town-house, where he

said he would only remain one week more, and, by the time that week had expired, he trusted Mrs. Peronett would either be dead or recovered.

The General was not the only person whom Mrs. Peronett's change towards Marian had perplexed: Lady Isabel saw that she was evidently acquainted with the secret of her birth. Of this she felt assured, but all her endeavours to elicit any information on the subject had completely failed: she would not even approach it, though she expressed a continued desire that Marian would return to her sick couch; and a peevish complaint was frequently expressed as to her leaving her to tend "that woman." The day after the General's visit, however, Marian's painful duty was at an end; she accompanied Lord Augustus and Godfrey Peronett back to the Deanery, but persisted in her intention of seeing the remains of the forlorn woman consigned to the grave. Miss Womble, of course, heard of the circumstance, and of the good fortune which had at last thrown the mantle of its protection over Marian, and resolved to be present in the church-

yard of old Chelsea to "pick up the news," being one of those who would wait for it amongst tomb-stones and green graves, things that tell in their stern and silent eloquence of the perishing nature of that vanity that bubbles on the stream of human life. Yet she sat her down upon a tomb-stone, and read thereon that "Mark, and Mary his wife, and five of their children, slept beneath;" nor did the reading of this record of those in whose bosoms the human passions once circulated, and who were now part and parcel of the damp earth, bring one thought—one reflection—to her mind; she was like the deaf adder that heard not the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. And then to beguile the time she counted the small boats on the Thames; and then she cast her "lack lustre" eyes up and down the grey old church-tower that throws its square shadows over the church-yard, and across the path. A world of knowledge could those old stones whisper—volumes record, of sighs, and tears, and smiles, and disappointments; changes, both moral and political: even the grey-headed daws that denizen the tower look wiser than

their fellows. But Miss Womble's worldliness swallowed up all speculations of this kind: the price of butchers' meat, the chatter of the crowd, being more genial to her thoughts and habits; and, if she did think at all about the church-tower, it was only, why in the world people built church-towers so strong; and then, finding the funeral was long coming, she gossiped a bit with the rosy sexton, who sat on the edge of the new-made grave, eating bread and cheese and drinking black frothy porter, diversifying his creature comforts by the employment of throwing back into the pit the large earth-worms that crept thereout, or chucking stones across the yawning gulf that was soon to entomb the body that had cared so daintily for itself. At last the hearse came, and a few idlers followed the heavy coffin, covered with decent black, to the church-porch; and Marian, though such is not the custom, was there, and the kind Doctor Darling, who would have made much more than that half-hour's sacrifice for the sake of Lady Isabel, or the foundling herself. Katty had accompanied her young lady,

and Miss Womble crept close to her, even while the funeral service was reading, too anxious to obtain news to think a great deal about the means. It would have rejoiced those who enjoy all manifestations of that disdain and contempt which sometimes one human being displays towards another to see the draw up of the head and baneful expression of countenance with which the Irish nurse surveyed "the lady," whose dress she had so often "got up" for nothing,—but silent contempt was not Katty's forte. The funeral service being over, the clergyman, compassionating Marian's distress,—for the nature of the service, so awful and so touching, might well draw tears from sterner eyes than hers,—and having, also, one or two matters to mention to the Doctor, invited them into the vestry, and Katty, who knew her situation too well to presume, wandered out of the churchyard, and stood by the river-side, apparently engaged in observing two little boys making "ducks and drakes" on the water, but actually thinking if Miss Womble, who was still beating about the place, would really speak to

her. Marian had not even observed the governess—the Doctor had; but latterly, pliant though he was, he had "cut" the lady; she *said* because her pupils had decreased, but the medico's motive was, to do him justice, very different:—as the world prospered with him, and he felt his own independence the more, he had grown more honest in his manifestations of liking and disliking; and, though he smiled on to the end of his days, the smiles he bestowed upon those he despised were anything but pleasing. Katty was not left long to her conjectures.

"Fine morning, good Nurse," said the schoolmistress.

"Oh, Miss Womble, that's you, is it? Well, I shouldn't have known you, I'm sure, you are so changed—so shrunk together, and drawn out, as a body may say! Well, to be sure! Miss, I hope the times aint so bad that you 're forced to live on the hard dumplins. Och, Ma'am, change yer laundress, for, blind as I am, I can see that collar's as yellow as a kite's foot—*looks as if it had been washed for nothing*.

Some people say you've left the school, Ma'am; but I said Miss Womble's not such a fool as to do that, while she could make anything by it. I'll go bail she has not left the school, *though the school may have left her.*"

Miss Womble was too overpowered by this torrent to reply; and, while Katty was obliged to pause for breath, she stood almost suffocated by rage, which seeing the position Katty took, she dared not vent.

"Ah, Miss, times are changed," continued Katty, enjoying her dismay: "it's many a fine bit and sup you had from the poor painted lady, that the earth-worms are talking over in their own quiet language at this very moment in the lone grave, but sorra a bit ye gave her whin she wanted. Ye'r a prudent woman, Miss Womble—give nothing—take all; yet it hasn't throve with you, poor thing! Dear, dear me! how drawn out you do look! be dad, Miss Honey, ye'r in the condition of Tim Noggins's ape,—more prized for yer tricks than yer beauty—augh!—augh!"

Bad as this was, the nurse's emphasis and

delivery made it much worse to hear than to read. Miss Womble had had her day, according to the old adage, but, instead of gathering up a rich store of blessings of the orphan and the innocent, that would have been to her old age as a crown of glory, she had gone on starving both the minds and bodies of the unfortunate girls committed to her care, until the sudden outbreak in favour of more rational education and better treatment in all systems upset her establishment, of which report had for some time spoken unfavourably. It had dwindled to the shadow of its former self, and she seemed doomed for the remnant of her days to exist, like the toad in a sandstone rock, alone with her own venom. Katty knew this, and, to confess a truth, did not regret it—she liked to see bad people punished, and it is not to be wondered that she ranked Miss Womble as one.

"Woman!" exclaimed the Governess at last, "you forget yourself."

"We all do that sometimes, but I don't forget you, Miss, machree, nor I don't forgive ye either—mind that! I don't mind doing an

extra *penance* or two during the year, to have liberty to hate ye all through it! I can't ask the Lord to forgive ye—I can't; ye came peeping and prying into the grave-yard for news, even among the rotting coffins; but all the news you'll get is what 'll scorch yer heart, for I have nothing to tell, but of the happiness, and honour, and glory of those you trampled on; and, look! there's the road forenint you; and go, Miss Womble, go—go, and don't be making me sin my soul more than's needful; go, and God keep the young out of yer way, and keep power out of yer hands, for yer worse than a faymale Boney-part, ten to one; even the sweet crame of the Doctor's countenance turns to *sour milk* when he looks at you."

Miss Womble had no chance at this wordy war: she muttered something about Katty's being a mad Irish woman, and sauntered down Cheyne Row, having obtained only the information that Marian and Katty came in Doctor Darling's carriage to the funeral; adding, that Marian was grown such a woman that she was

sure it could not be very pleasant to pretty little Mrs. Darling to have a girl like *that* driving about with *her* husband.

Of course Katty's observations were treasured in her own bosom, for she was too cunning to suffer any evil of herself to transpire.

It will be remembered that Marian once thought her fine voice might promote her independent desires, and Lady Isabel promised to read her one of those practical lessons on the danger of female publicity that are so forcible by the mere strength of example. About a week after the funeral of Mrs. Jones she fulfilled her promise:—the lesson was in itself fearful. A young and clever girl without a home, and most painfully situated, married a man much beneath her; and, finding out, after the expiration of a month, that he was not only low in connexion, but of debased mind; sprang, as it were, upon the stage, as a means of support, where her magnificent musical talent commanded success. She had done so with a mind full of honest and excellent resolves, with a firm desire to do right—with a prayer;

but, no, *she did not pray, if she had prayed she would not have fallen!* Poor thing! she trusted to her integrity of purpose, and, elated with success—flushed with triumph—her unguarded and unworldly manners reaped, as their reward, a reputation, not blighted exactly, but *breathed* upon by that class of men whose breath is poison. Those, few as they were in number, of her own sex, whom she respected, and who ought boldly to have rallied round a sister whom they believed in danger, shrank from her. She was worse than alone in the world! for she had the clog of a base and cruel husband—a *yoke*-fellow, but no help; and this at the time when all the town were at her feet; this, as has been said before, all brilliant as it is, never yet filled the aching void in woman's heart. Her curse seemed to be always to love unworthily: she fell: knowing *then* that she *was* degraded, she became reckless, and this recklessness was increased by the desertion of the fashionable roué who courted her as a step to further notoriety. She went on from bad to worse, and in the midst

of a career of professional success, multitudinous scandal, and bitter self-reproach, the poor actress's health gave way, and she had no friends—envy, and that mock religion which blasts where it ought to bless, did their worst. She crept down to Twickenham with the remnant of her earnings, to die like a hunted cat away from the scenes of her feverish home.

Lord Augustus heard her story, and took the proper means, as a minister of the Gospel, to relieve her, No earthly power could save her for this world, but her repentance was so unfeigned, her sorrow so sincere, that Lady Isabel did not disdain to aid her brother's desire to sooth her bed—her bed of *early* death.

Lady Isabel was almost sorry she had mentioned her story as an antidote to Marian's vaulting ambition—for on consideration she thought the remedy stronger than the disease required: the maiden's native delicacy would have had a long war with her independence before she could have consented to public display; but in the end Lady Isabel was glad she had so acted, for the poor dying creature was

no other than the kind and clever Tom Kemp—Miss Tom—of Marian's first school-days. Her imprudence had been hardly punished; but the kindness she showed the little imprisoned Marian was amply requited; her spirit was completely broken—she would cry herself to sleep, and wake to weep again.

Lady Isabel was anxious to note what effect their meeting would produce on Marian's mind; her imagination had gilded and gemmed the brass—the cymbal had clanged in her ear—but when she beheld the fate of her poor school-fellow—shivering on her bed of death—heard of her triumphs—of her fall, and *saw* her misery, she felt a thrill of horror at the idea of being placed where such results are possible. She felt that if a woman has to choose between two extremes — obscurity or publicity — her happiness is far more secure with the former than with the latter. No one could be more aware of this fact than the poor sufferer herself, upon whom death had laid so fast a hold: the splendour and gilded vices of the world were, to her, as the fitful fever of a brain-sick dream,

and her penitence was earnest and sincere. Lady Isabel was glad to see that the effect produced by a single interview on Marian's mind was exactly what she desired; and, seeing this, she avoided entering upon the topic: the seed being sown, she had patience to let it grow simply and naturally, convinced that the soil was good.

Mrs. Peronett prevailed upon Lady Isabel to accompany her with Marian to the sea-side, where she determined to remove as soon as possible, for she manifested a strange restless desire to be altogether away from the General's inspection, and Godfrey's visible attention to Marian threw her into a state of agitation that continued to mystify Lady Isabel continually; but Marian would not desert "poor Tom,' without finding her a fitting nurse and companion in the person of Miss Kitty, whom Miss Womble had altogether abandoned, and who could not procure another situation. Katty, however, as she called it, "ferreted out the poor little scrawl," and Lady Isabel, whose moral energies gained new strength by exer-

tion, had the generosity to permit Marian the satisfaction of seeing the persecuted teacher established on a low chair by the bed-side of the poor dying creature, whom nature, in her prodigality of one particular talent, seemed to have designed for a better purpose. There, however, sat Miss Kitty, not at all changed, except, perhaps, that her hair was thinner and stuck out more than of old; it was grey also —so grey, that Marian covered the poor head with a cap — a very neat cap — which Miss Kitty said that when she took off perhaps she should not know how to put on again, and after much bewilderment suggested the necessity for sleeping in it! However, that matter was arranged, and Marian saw her seated by poor Tom's bed-side, darning the stockings that seemed to be afflicted with everlasting holes.

Lady Isabel heard no more of Marian's singing-scheme; but she perceived that she chose ballads rather than bravuras, and calculated, rightly, that her desire arose from an earnest wish to elevate herself by her own exertions,

which is one of those noble and ennobling movements in the human mind that is sure to purify wherever it circulates. Perhaps, also, new emotions, or, rather, a new *emotion* not grown into an idea, drew her almost unconsciously away from her usual course of thought. She found herself seeking out the books that Godfrey Peronett had praised, tossing on one side those he had pronounced worthless ;—rising at four, the very morning after he had declared Italian " the fittest language for ladies' lips," and sitting wide awake, with an Italian vocabulary in her hand, even before sunrise. Still more remarkable was it to find her absolutely sitting in the oriel window of Lord Augustus's study, her feet raised upon a foot-stool, with an old copy of Blackstone open on her knees; and so intent was she—so busied, either with her own thoughts or the " Commentaries,"—that she did not hear the approach of Godfrey, nor become sensible of his presence until he asked her what she was reading? Closing the book quickly, and blushing deeply, she answered, " Nothing ! "

"Hear this, ye lawyers of England!" exclaimed Godfrey, drawing a chair near her,—"Hear this, ye lawyers of England!—Miss Marian calls Blackstone 'Nothing!'"

"Oh, no—only—it's a strange book."

"You have been reading, then?"

"Strange, old-looking book, I meant," she said, laying it on the table, and taking up a small volume of sermons—and both continued silent for a few moments. Godfrey observing (though he did not say so), that Marian had turned upside down the book she held in her hand.

"What are you thinking of?" whispered Godfrey Peronett to her.

Marian sat with her eyes still fixed upon the book.

"Are you thinking of land, or sea, or friends, or ——?" and he whispered so *very* closely that Marian almost shrank from him.

"Were you thinking of me?"

"Of you, oh, no! I was thinking of a good man."

"Thank you for the inference."

"Indeed, Mr. Peronett, I did not mean that either; I am sure you are very excellent; but I was thinking of Lord Augustus—of his benevolence—and of how much it is possible for every one to do to benefit fellow-creatures by acting promptly upon good intentions. It is a blessing—a choice and dear blessing—to learn of him; and his charities are so silently bestowed,—there is no parade, no show about them. No one in this world can tell how I do love that dear old gentleman!"

"I shall be jealous!" was the next whisper.

Marian blushed, but made no reply.

"I wish I were Lord Augustus."

"I dare say you do," said Marian, laughing.

"For then I might be loved by you." This was still more *sotto voce;* but Marian shook her head and blushed still more deeply, then remembered something that must be done immediately, and would not remain, though Godfrey entreated her to do so; and when she was fairly out of the room she thought how foolish she had been, and wondered what he would think; and thinking of that prevented her un-

derstanding what she either thought or felt herself, though Godfrey Peronett was very often in her thoughts, perhaps more frequently than the benevolent Dean himself; and certainly, even while practising the good old gentleman's favourite songs—now with no higher ambition than pleasing those she loved —she often paused to consider if Godfrey would or would not visit them at the sea-side—but much was about to occur at that sea-side, upon which her future destiny depended.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE HONEST SPY.

"A CHORA machree was you, my own jewel! the delight of my heart—the pride of my eyes! Keep asy, will you, mavourneen? Now I vow to the blessed Virgin, I 'll never let on another word of any sort. Sure, I thought all along—and how could I help it?—that you had the spirit of a lion. When the cruel torment of that giddy chill-hearted woman was on you, didn't the pride rouse in ye; and you, whose ra'ael nature is as soft and gentle as a lamb, became great, like a queen;—then, when the poverty was upon us—didn't you bear up against that and the sickness without a complaint of any sort? I niver heard a murmur from your lip, when you had hardly anything to put inside it! And to see you now, with your eyes fixed, and your soft hand pressed against your throat, as if you war choking. Oh, a chora machree! spake just

one word — spake—the one word—nurse, or maybe dear nurse—!"

But Marian Winter could not speak—she had no power of speech.

The slowness of Mrs. Peronett's recovery had obliged her to defer the projected removal for a long time, but at last Lady Isabel and Marian accompanied her to Hastings.

Katty was also deemed necessary in a sort of double capacity. Mrs. Peronett "borrowed" her of the good Dean, averring that she could eat nothing that was not prepared by her hands. A week had elapsed since their arrival at the sea side, and Katty Macane had watched day after day for an opportunity to speak to her "young lady" touching certain surmises, which she could no longer conceal, and which had day by day strengthened into certainty: she could neither eat nor sleep—but kept wandering about from place to place—in short she could think of nothing else, and at last succeeded, when midnight tolled its longest hour, in informing her nursling of all she knew — of all she supposed. The

lamp was still burning, and any one who looked on Marian would have imagined she was a statue; every trace of colour had faded from her face,—her hair, black as a raven's wing, contrasted with the marble-like hue of her features. One hand was pressed upon her throat, the other twisted and twisted the chain which hung upon her neck.

"Speak to me, avourneen!" repeated the affectionate Katty; "speak to me!—my God!" she suddenly exclaimed, catching the fainting girl in her arms, as she fell towards the ground. "My God, I have murdered her!"

Marian, however, soon recovered: her nurse wished her to go to bed; but it was her heart and not her eyes that was heavy. She desired Katty to open the window—the clear beautiful moonlight streamed into the chamber—and in the distance slumbered the broad grey sea, heaving beneath a long silver strip of light, which alone betrayed the motion of its waters. There was no noise in the air; it penetrated in all its purity through the low screen of evergreens that shaded the window,

without disturbing their clustering leaves—it was indeed the sleep of Nature; but Marian's blood ran hot and rapidly through her veins—the freshness of the atmosphere recalled her to herself, but to her nurse's entreaties that she would go to bed, she replied—

"No, I will sit here, Nurse, and listen to you again. I must understand it fully before morning, that I may know how to act."

"The thing I am afeer'd of, my darlint young lady—the very thing I dread. I don't want you to act—leave it to time—leave it to time," she repeated, as she nestled at Marian's feet, circling her waist with her arm, so that she might feel how she supported her words. "Why, you are trembling like a bird that sees a hawk in the air, sure, alanna machree! you are as wake as an infant—I was desaved in your strength—I thought you'd a better heart!"

"It was never really tried till now! Oh, Nurse, Nurse—I wish I was at rest—I wish I could not feel or think! indeed, indeed, my heart will break; I must know the truth."

"You may believe that what I have tould

you was the truth; how long is it, now, since that unfortunate Mrs. Jones's death?"

"Nearly three months."

"See that—well, dear—though my mind misgave me, I don't know why; yet I never took it steady and reasonable into my head—though the wonderful likeness struck me often—until the time Mrs. Peronett was so bad, and them fine toads and nurses of sarvants so lazy; and Lady Isabel (I'll say that for you Lady Isabel, dead or alive, it's an angel you, always war!) working herself to fritters, tending on Mrs. Peronett—which, to be sure, from a lady to a lady, was noways demaning—only the labour was too much for her. Well, my dear, it might or it might not have come into my head; because, ever since her getting up, Mrs. Peronett has been very curos about you, asking all manner of questions, and changing colour, from yellow to red—so sweet, for a black-a-viced* lady like her: and so mighty generous to me, though she has in general a *hard hand*. But what struck me dumb a'most was

* Dark-featured.

the crest on her handkerchief being the same as that on the purse, which I have tould you for the first time this blessed night how I got at—the crest, and the *aenetials* the same; and the name worked at the back of the purse, which I had all the maynouvering about getting from Paddy Charley's wife, many a long day back; and the surprising fancy she has took to you, setting her eyes in you ever and always, and not bearing you out of her sight, and trying to promote all love and affection between you and Master Henry, unknownst to the General; he thinking she does it for sweethearting, while she, poor lady, is doubtless wishful that you should love each other as brother and sister."

"It is most inexplicable," interrupted Marian. "She has never, of course, said so distinctly; but, whenever she spoke of Henry, her manner, if not her direct words, convinced me that she wished me to love him."

"As a brother," put in Katty.

"I think—I am almost certain, not as a brother," said Marian.

"Not as a lover, then," asserted Katty, looking pained and astonished. "I am sure not as a lover: you girls are always thinking of lovers. Lord! sure it *can* only be as a brother; from putting that, and that together, pausing and turning it over in my own mind, I am certain you are *her* born child, and Masther Henry's sister. Many and many a fine lady who holds her head, feathers and all, as high as St. Paul's, has been glad to make a foundling of her own child, to hide her own shame."

"If this be true," said Marian, bitterly, "there is an end for ever to my honest hopes of being of honest birth; and I have told you before that I lived but in that hope. Think, Nurse, think, if it is so, that she is ashamed—ashamed, however she may love,—ashamed to own me. And I would rather die a thousand deaths than find my parent in a dishonoured wife! Oh, Nurse! Nurse! this last bitterness is hard to bear; but you spoke of farther proof."

"I did: when Mrs. Jones died you came away, leaving all she had (but little to be

sure) to the people of the house. I thought there might be found among her papers a bracelet of hair—black—black hair—which she discovered among your clothes. I thought I had rummaged them, too, pretty well, considering; but she laid hands on it for all my care, and I never could get sign or sight of it after the time she showed it me. I dare say, finding it of little money value, she did not think of it herself, and did not tell you anything about it. I said nothing to nobody, but set off to the house, put my comeether on the people, and, in a way too bothersome to come over, I got at the odds and ends of ribbons, and muslins, and scraps, (such trash!) as the poor woman left; there, sure enough, though half eaten by the moths, I found it. I knew I had seen its fellow on Mrs. Peronett's arm and she sick,—a broad hair bracelet, which she had sense enough to keep on her bare arm."

"Where is it?" inquired Marian.

The Nurse replied by placing it in her hand. Marian took it in her trembling fingers: —it was a broad flat bracelet, very much, as

Katty had said, destroyed by moth, but firm at the clasp, which was broad, flat, and plain.

Marian turned it over and over. "This is no proof—no clue," she said, sorrowfully, as she dropped it into her lap. "There is no cipher—nothing; one bracelet may be like another without any reason; there is nothing in this."

"Nothing, to be sure!" echoed Katty; "nothing at all, as a body may say; only it 's a something for all that."

"So it is—a something—but nothing more," repeated Marian, taking it up again and examining the clasp more closely than she had done before: her finger pressed upon a concealed spring that doubtless had escaped poor Mrs. Jones's inspection.

"That 's a something, at all events!" exclaimed Katty, joyfully starting up and bringing the light forward; "that is a something, anyway. I thought it better to let you find it out yourself than to tell you."

Marian gazed at a small and exquisitely

painted miniature for some time in silence, and then her eyes met Katty's.

"It's the hand of the Almighty in his goodness and wisdom!" said Katty; that's just what it is—and nothing else!"

"It is of *her*, most certainly!" sighed Marian, and she could hardly breathe as she spoke. "It is of *her*, most certainly.—Great God! then what am I?"

"The evil spirit of sin must have been in her, to have wronged that noble gentleman. No wonder she's so bitter and dark in herself."

"How know you, Nurse, that she did wrong him?" said Marian indignantly. "What proof have you that she was a traitor to her husband?"

"Her seeking to hide you, a lannan—isn't that enough, my jewel? need one ask any more?"

Marian covered her face with her hands. "Shame will be upon me to my grave"—she said bitterly—"after all, shame will be upon me. Let what will come to me, I shall go forth, now and for ever, with the brand burnt into my forehead—the curse which parents who sin

entail upon their sinless infants—the brand that breaks with its terrific bar the noblest escutcheon! I am a bastard!"

She shuddered as she pronounced the word, whose import—no matter how they reason—has weighed down the noblest spirits.

"Cheer up, Agra! we'd all be born very different to what we are, and u'd be for sending the Almighty a plan of improvement for the world and all that's in it, if we had our own way. There's the great and wonderful King William this minute, my dear, upon his throne, with every one in the world that comes near him bowing to his feet, and paying him the finest compliments; sitting this moment on his throne, at the head of a great nation, with THE DUKE for a subject:—think of that! one single glory, which like the sun in Heaven, puts out all the rest—the grate DUKE OF WELLINGTON himself, my dear, for a subject! and yet, as he sits there, there's one thing he can't have, my dear child, though all the world is at his beck,—and though it's a simple innocent thing—which the poor little chimney-

sweep has—God help us! though he doesn't know it for the bitterness of soot and sorrow—and the poor factory-child has it—though the stripes and the starvation forces trouble and toil upon it, at the only time when the heart is free from care;—and the bird in the nest has it,—and it is with you still, Miss Marian, though you don't feel its blessing now. And if the King—King William himself—could have it—could feel he had it again—he'd give his crown for it—he would. They may tell him he doesn't want it; but he *knows* he does. He wants his YOUTH—his YOUTH, Miss Marian; but he'll never see it more. D'ye see the *moral*, my dear young lady?—the moral:—we all want what we can't have."

"I believe you are right, Nurse."

"I am, a vourneen; but it's flying in God's face to go on a-grumbling, and a-faulting our cross. Whatever it may be, if it wasn't God's will to be there, why it would not be there—that's the short and the long of it. Let us thry to jump over it, or creep under it, or put it aside; and, if we can do none of these, why

then let us bear it, and say as poor Sebastian Sam did to his wife,—his two legs war shot off at St. Sebastian, and, whin he came home, his wife—instead of praising God for his return, legs or no legs—began crying in her vulgar way. And so, looking cheerfully in her face, poor fellow! 'Jenny,' said he, 'it might have been worse—I might have lost my sight—and then I could not look upon and bless you and the childre as I do now.'"

"Nurse—dear Nurse," said Marian, upon whom Katty's beautiful lesson was at that time thrown away,—"Nurse can you tell me,—you, whose advice I have so often followed,—can you tell me what I ought to do? may I not repeat what you have said to Lady Isabel?"

"Leave it to time my darlint; time will tell; leave it to time, Miss Marian."

"Leave it to time?" she repeated. "Why, Nurse, you speak as if it were a thing of naught! do you think that I could bear to hear, see, and speak to her, whom you say is my mother, and not call her so? Nurse, of what do you suppose I am made?"

"Good wholesome flesh and blood, avourneen; never a doubt of that at all, at all!"

"Nurse!" exclaimed Marian impatiently, "you grow old—you do not feel for me!"

"I grow old, to be sure," replied Katty, wounded by Marian's observation—"I do grow old; and so does the world; and sin and sorrow and all things made to perish grow old, Miss Marian; and I go on fast towards perishing myself—that is, my flesh and bones will perish, but the things that don't perish you see are the faith, and the hope, and the love, Miss Marian—the love that rises in a woman's heart for the infant she takes into it—not *to* it, but *into it*, as I took you. I have nothing more to say, except that it is time for me to grow old when you—*you*—think I do not feel for you!" Katty Macane would have departed, had not Marian thrown her arms round her neck and detained her by most gentle violence."

"Nurse—dear Nurse—forgive me; I was cruel—unjust—heartless—anything you please; —I will ask your pardon on my knees, if you will but forgive me:—do, pray, listen to me; I cannot

bear to see tears—tears at my bidding—on these dear old cheeks; I will act by your advice."

"You will not," replied Katty; "nor is it to be expected that you would. Whin did the young war-horse ever heed the preaching of an ould one? But I do not so much mind that; the thing I do mind is, that you should say I did not—." Marian would not let her proceed.

"Stop, Nurse, I did not mean it, you know I did not! Do forgive me—will you not, dear Nurse? indeed, indeed I am sorry, deeply sorry—I have been so perplexed, so agitated; advise with me. I am wild and untaught; my feelings suffocate both my reason and my words."

"Ay, darlint, I forgive you, though the words *war* hard upon me, I own that; but it's no matter; only, if you will take my advice, it is this:—keep tranquil for a few days; just watch and observe. You point to the picture; well, that 's, as one may say, an out-and-out proof; but what can you do? You can't say a word of it to Lady Isabel, because, if you do, it 's like exposing one's own flesh and blood!—if you

have only patience, darlint, it 's working out beautiful."

"And when it does work out, Nurse, what good will it do me? It will only stab me—stab me to the heart!"

"Well, dear, only wait for two or three days longer, that's all I'll ask. I don't think I'd have told you at all yet, only my heart ached for that poor lady. I could kill her with this hand, and, with this, take her to my heart—that warms to her, God forgive me, for being your mother:—but sure I found out how she has got Master Henry down here, unknown to his grandpapa, the proud, queer, comical, clean, little ould Gineral. And I know it cut her to the heart to observe the stiffness you show Masther Henry; for she, proud as she is, even spoke to me about it."

"Did she indeed?" inquired Marian eagerly.

"Ay, and troth did she, and bid me say nothing about it; and looked both abashed and troubled all the time the words war coming out of her mouth;—wondered what cause of dislike you could have to her son—hoped you'd con-

quer it; and then sounded me (and troth! she's a firm good hand at the plummet; but for all that I'm too deep for her!) as to whether I thought you had any leaning towards Masther Godfrey, or Masther Godfrey towards you." Katty's eye fixed upon Marian while she pronounced Godfrey's name, and the quick, deep, burning blush that followed its enunciation convinced her that the suspicions Mrs. Peronett entertained were well founded. "I tould her," said the politic nurse, "that I thought neither of you were given that way; 'for sure,' I said, 'it would be a bad look-out for both.'"

"A bad look-out," interrupted Marian, "for any one to be the beloved of Godfrey Peronett—Godfrey, whom the Dean says is so good, and Lady Isabel says is so clever, and—oh, Nurse! how could you think or say that Godfrey Peronett would not deserve the attention of any woman whom he honoured by his love?"

"I didn't say a word about love," said Katty.

Marian was all confusion. She feared she had

betrayed the great, the deep, the treasured secret of her heart, but lately known to herself; and, like the lapwing, eager to secure the safety of its hidden brood by apparently forsaking its retreat, she hastily replied, "Nor I—I did not—it was you who spoke thereof; but what does that signify? May I not tell Lady Isabel?"

"Of the love you bear Godfrey Peronett, my darlint?" said Katty, with apparent simplicity.

"Oh, Nurse! how can you talk so foolishly at an hour like this? Why should I love Godfrey, or Godfrey me?—what can he be to me, or I to him?—I meant as to what we have discovered. I know my heart will break."

"Miss Marian, I have told you before, you know yourself, you cannot mention this to Lady Isabel; you cannot betray the life-secret of your own parent. What I would recommend would be, that you should treat that youth (who is your brother) more kindly—it 's a good thing to have a brother—treat him more warmly."

"And, if I do, he 'll renew that love-making,

which, particularly now, would be more detestable than ever. And I am not sure but if I did—to say the truth, Nurse—it might make me seem fickle in the esteem of Lady Isabel, to whom I could not give the reason for so sudden and so strange a change; and moreover—" she paused—so long, so very long, that at last Katty said, "Go on, avourneen—go on."—"Go on?" repeated Marian; "where was I?"

'Nowhere in particular, my darlint; that is what I want to know, where you were going."

"Heaven knows, dear Nurse, not I.—I am weary, weary, and heart-broken: my feelings will not let me rest; nor can I think or speak. I will pray; and you, dear Nurse, do you pray for me; it will do me good, I am sure it will. I trust the Almighty will direct me for the best." Marian threw herself on her bed, and tried to sleep, but her rest was broken by a thousand fancies; real as well as imaginary evils pressed heavily upon her; she knew not what to do—she could not open her heart to Lady Isabel; for the first time since she had been under her protection she felt that it would be necessary

to conceal her thoughts. This was a most painful knowledge; her frank and open nature had been shut up during her young years, but, when the barriers were removed, it poured forth the full tide of confidence and affection. Never did lark revel more in the sunshine than this plaything of fortune had done in the kindness of her benefactors.

It was evident, to those who knew Mrs Peronett at all, that she was much changed, not only in body but in mind. Marian had found her weeping more than once; she had become more reserved and less bitter,—thoughtful and sorrowful; though at times her pride would break forth with more than its usual asperity, as an occasional thunder-clap disturbs without dispelling the dark clouds which overspread a landscape.

It was in vain that, when poor Marian started from a troubled dream, she prayed for tranquillity,—she only slept to dream of new perplexities; at one moment Godfrey Peronett (who, despite Mrs. Peronett's repulsive manners, had been during the three last days Lady

Isabel's constant visitor) was at her side whispering hopes and happiness, which if waking she dared not think upon, when Mrs. Peronett rushed between them, and with a dagger divided the hands that had been clasped together. Then she saw Henry, pale as a corpse, reproach his mother with deception, and cast her from him with expressions of the most bitter scorn. At last the morning broke cheerfully; the sun rose from his ocean-bed, strong as a giant refreshed with sleep; the busy people of the beautiful Saint Leonard's were abroad—some, in search of health, met the ocean breezes in the early morning; others, hunting for amusement, waited for the evening, and left the balmy freshness of the morning's prime to the more rational portion of the creation. Marian descended to the breakfast-room in a state of the most feverish anxiety. And, as if the most perplexing events of her existence were destined to be crowded into the smallest possible space of time, the first person she met was Henry Peronett. It is more than likely that a youth at his age, and of his volatile and sport-

ing tastes, would have long before exchanged Marian for some other love, or, what would have answered his purpose equally well, for some other fancy, had he not been led, by the General's opposition to his choice, to consider himself a martyr in the cause of the tender passion. The only way to get Henry Peronett to do exactly what was wanted to be done was to endeavour to persuade him to a contrary course to that which was desired, and, whether in act or argument, he was certain to start off in opposition of whatever was proposed. United to this obstinacy of disposition he had an affectionate heart; and was precisely at that age when boys imagine their manhood must have arrived at perfection if they "fall in love." Mrs. Peronett had not given her son any reason to suppose that, as regarded Marian, her wishes were opposed to the General's, though Henry perfectly understood that, with an unaccountable perverseness, Mrs. Peronett thwarted her father-in-law at every convenient opportunity.

Marian, prepared as she was to meet him,

felt so agitated when the *voice*, which she believed *her brother's*, came upon her ear, that she could not reply to the kindly good-morrow which Henry gave with more gentle courtesy than it is generally in the power of college youths to infuse into their manners. He perceived her emotion, and the usual vanity of his sex imputed it to some return of the affection which, for a boyish love, had been long cherished. In a moment he was by her side; inquired with unfeigned anxiety after her health; thought that, as she blushed, she had never looked so beautiful; and was transported beyond all bounds when he found that his attentions were not repulsed as usual. Marian's charms had not failed to attract universal admiration: her cold and dignified carriage had been softened by that prosperity which makes the low-minded arrogant, and renders the high-minded humble. Let poets talk as they will about violets and lilies of the valley; half the men in existence would neither have the taste nor feeling to appreciate the violets and lilies of human nature, unless they were pointed out

to them and admired by the other half. Although beauty is a speaking, animating appeal to the eye and heart, in the world we live in there is more fashion in its appreciation than its admirers would be willing to admit!

Marian, the beloved protégée of one so rich and influential as Lady Isabel Gascoigne, would be a very different person, even in the eyes of the beauty-loving world, to Marian, the insulted sojourner in the house of Mrs. Cavendish Jones.

But there was one, despite his efforts to the contrary, who loved the foundling maiden with an intensity of pure, yet passionate love, which but ill brooked the restraints of prudence or concealment. It was in vain he pictured to himself the disgrace that waits upon unknown birth—it was in vain he called to mind and counted over the names and states of his good ancestors—goodly they were, and rich—stanch and respectable—worthy — of untainted descent—and would (if they were living) flout at such a union—but what was all that to Marian?

From the first hour he had seen her, he had

loved her—loved her despite the arguments he turned and twisted, revised and re-revised, to prove that love at first sight was utterly impossible. He reasoned on it—poor man! he might have known that, to a frank and ardent nature, reasoning on love is useless pastime—it can be overcome only by an effort strong as a whirlwind, such as uproots the young and vigorous oak in its bright leafing-time. Your staid and sober man may reason on the passion—ay, and with profit too—tot up the loss on one side, profit on the other, and act accordingly; but your warm natures must cast it far away at once, though death were in the parting, or, nine times out of ten, sweet love will gain the victory.

He had seen many women he had admired—worn their chains too, as man will wear them, more for display then use—trifled with them—been in slight love, as people have slight fevers—but all the women he had seen were Ethiops compared to Marian.

Godfrey Peronett, (for he it was whom Marian Winter had thus unconsciously enslaved)

—Godfrey Peronett, had he been rich, would have forgotten the maiden's obscurity of birth, and warmly set about his wooing; but he was poor, and no way willing to submit to the old General's caprices; he took to Temple dinners and to law, resolved to make his fortune: —but out upon all musty law!—his law was fresh and fair, blooming, yet holy as the morning star that rises in the purity of light; he felt the power of no law but Marian's!

Lady Isabel noted the change in her young friend, and was much amused by it: his favourite talk had been at other times not so much of the opera—though he loved *that*, as all men must who love music—nor of the theatres, for that period might be considered almost an interregnum in dramatic glory. Kean, and Charles Kemble, and Macready were amongst us as several stars; but the theatres were devoid of everything approaching moral management or unity of purpose. John Kemble's sceptre still rested on his coffin, where it might have remained for ever, had it not been for one, who to *his* knowledge

adds a high sense of those moralities, those proprieties, which he has proved can purify all places. The blessing of every right thinking British woman should be as a glory around his head, for they can enjoy at one great theatre the highest of all intellectual enjoyments, without the eye or ear suffering insult or offence;*—Godfrey did not then speak much of the drama, because he admired Kean, and Lady Isabel was always upholding John Kemble, so that they rather differed on the subject; but they were perfectly agreed as to the beauties of Florence, Venice, Rome, Old England and her glories, her laws, her triumphs.—Now (for his love was in itself too noble to teach him to forget the noble things

* It is a year since these pages were written, and Mr. Macready, recompensed by the gratitude and respect not only of all who love the Drama, but all who honour moral dignity and public propriety, has retired from the management of Covent Garden Theatre. That he has done so is a source of deep regret,—for his occupying such a position was of itself a guarantee that all things under his control would reflect credit on a profession, of which he is the brightest ornament our time has seen.

which animate all noble natures)—now, it was softened; visions of England's homes mingled with the remembrance of England's glories—and he went so far as to assure, nay almost to swear to Lady Isabel, that he would rather live in a low-roofed cottage, one of those mock-humility abodes, whose sweet rusticity looks as if put on, like a fair Quaker's dress at a gay fancy ball, to win admirers by its simplicity. He vowed he would rather dwell in a particular one (Marian had brought them all to look at it) than in the palace of the Medici.

It was, then, with a feeling of exceeding pain that, when Godfrey Peronett called soon after breakfast to know what were Lady Isabel's plans for the day, and whether he could aid and assist therein, he saw his cousin Henry tying up a bouquet of flowers for Marian, and, though Marian did certainly look pale and distressed, Henry evinced so much pleasure and happiness, that Godfrey perceived something had occurred, be it what it might, to change the aspect of affairs since the preceding night: he at once became thoughtful

and irritable; not that Marian smiled upon Henry, but she listened to his nonsense with interest. Now a lover never thinks he can talk nonsense to his mistress, though he considers everything every other man says to the object of his affections to be sheer absurdity.

Mrs. Peronett seldom made her appearance till dinner; consequently there was ample time given to the young folk to pursue their own plans and amusements.

Nothing, however, had now the power to interest Marian,—even Godfrey's presence was unheeded; tears were perpetually rising to her eyes,—her heart was filled with one anxiety, and but one. It was in vain that Lady Isabel endeavoured to find out the cause; Marian was too truthful to deny that she was agitated by strong emotions, but she refused to communicate their origin, and withdrew to her own room, declining to ride or walk, or bathe or boat, or join any one of the various pastimes which her friends proposed. The two young men went out together without forming any plan as to the arrangements supposed

to be necessary to existence at the sea-side. Godfrey having promised to meet Lady Isabel at the library at five.

"To think, now, my dear cousin, after all, how marvellously Marian's manner changed to me to-day!" exclaimed Henry, joyfully; "did it not?—And, though her spirits were depressed, she spoke so kindly, so gently to me—she took my flowers and placed them in her bosom."

"Indeed!" muttered Godfrey.

"She did, and let me take her hand too, and I should have kissed it, but that Lady Isabel, who wanders about like a lost Pleïad, came in (plague take her!) at the moment."

"Kiss her hand!" repeated Godfrey; "you must have a great deal of presumption to take such a liberty, and I am very certain she would not have permitted it."

"Never be too certain of anything where a woman is concerned," replied Henry gaily. "Never:—the more distant they are at first. the more likely they are to come round—like a horse."

"What nonsense college-boys do talk!" exclaimed Godfrey impatiently. — "See how beautiful that pleasure-boat looks! how gaily it skims along the waters! you said you were going sailing with some friends."

"Sink the pleasure-boat!" he replied. "I would talk of Marian. Now, Godfrey, who the devil would have thought, after the piece of work she made about that unfortunate letter, which got you into such a scrape with my old Governor, and which I must make up to you one of these days, my boy—who in the world would fancy, after all her pride and coyness about that letter, after her most uncalled-for promise to the General about myself,—her distance to me there, where by my mother's own desire I came, stealing from Oxford, lest my grandfather should find me out; — you should have seen her curtsy, Godfrey!—her curtsy!—the very type of coldness, gracious coldness, that chills by its civility;—who but a very woman, after all this, would, of herself—mind you, entirely of herself,—come round—extend a hand that trembled within mine, whose

pulses I could feel beat audibly within my grasp—inquire in love's own accents for my health!"

"Henry!" interrupted Godfrey in no gentle tone, "Henry, you are grown a confounded puppy."

"Now, cousin," replied the boy, with perfect good humour, for he was too elated to be easily put out—"now, cousin, you do me injustice; I confess at one time that I was rather puppyish—a little so—when I got muzzled by that swindling Trufit, or whatever his name was, and the rest of them—but, faith, I *am* not a puppy now:—no, I am too much of *a man* for that:"—and he drew up his lithe and graceful figure to its full height, while Godfrey, hurt, mortified, perplexed, not knowing what to say or do, frowned by his side.—"Well," persisted Henry, too much occupied by his own thoughts and his own happiness to heed his cousin's waywardness—"well, now, Godfrey, don't you think the better plan will be, not for me to worry myself as to the cause, but be quite satisfied with the effect?—'It 's an ill wind

that blows nobody good.'—She's an angel! and it's the only time that my stately mother and myself ever agreed in an opinion.—Strange, is it not? — I cannot fancy how her pride has got over the mystery of Marian's birth, —can you?"

"Why do you ask me such absurd questions? how should I know anything about the workings of your mother's mind?"

"Upon my word, master Godfrey,—Chief Justice of the King's Bench, or Chief Baron of the Exchequer, which is it to be?—you are in a marvellously ill humour this morning: have you been playing and lost, or have you been jilted?"—He paused, and looked in his cousin's face, then suddenly burst out laughing, and exclaimed—"Faith, Godfrey, I believe thus it is; you are jealous."

Godfrey Peronett bestowed on poor Henry a look of most withering anger, but the light-hearted boy laughed on. "You have not been playing me false, using cogged dice, eh, Godfrey, so as to secure the throw I wanted—have you?

"False!" repeated Godfrey; "I play you false! boy, you are mad, or dreaming."

"Neither the one nor the other," replied Henry, waxing angry, not so much at the imputation as at the epithet boy; "but, were I either mad or dreaming, I can only say that I think you very indifferent company this morning; why—I cannot tell."

They walked on a little longer in silence, but Henry was too much excited to permit it to continue for any time.

"She certainly is devilish handsome," he exclaimed at last. This coarse approbation of a being whom Godfrey had enshrined in his heart as a divinity roused his temper again.

"Do you speak of a sporting mare, or of a woman?" he inquired contemptuously.

"I speak of Marian, and you know it; but I am glad to see two Oxonians yonder, who will prove more companionable than your most noble judgeship. No wonder, with that beautiful temper, that the Governor said you would never do for t

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Henry burst into what Lady Isabel stigmatised as his 'horse-laugh'—"Upon my soul, Sir Cousin, if you continue thus on stilts, I shall feel inclined to pull you down;—Godfrey," he added, with a changed voice and manner, "it is many months since we have been together: you know that I have ever loved you, I will not say as an elder brother, for few junior ones, I believe, ever *do* love their elders, particularly if the property is entailed,—but I have loved you as a friend; why will you break up our friendship with so strange a humour? If my mother is unjust to you, I cannot help it. I would it were not so; and as to the Governor, he is as harsh to me as he is to you. If I have crossed your path with Marian, remember——"

"You cross my path with Marian!" repeated Godfrey in a tone very unlike his natural one; *you*, indeed!—but, pray do not think it necessary to say anything on the subject; a

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young lady's name is too sacred to be bandied from lip to lip."

"I bandy her name from lip to lip!" said Henry indignantly. "I!—This is past all bearing.—I, who when I saw her in that vile house, tyrannized over by that vile woman, was the first to take her part—I, to whom she owes the very protection she now enjoys!"

"Miss Winter owe Lady Isabel's protection to you?" muttered Godfrey. "But we will talk of this again," he added, withdrawing his arm from Henry's, as the young men, his cousin had pointed out, as Oxonians, approached. "Now I will wish you good morning." He turned on his heel without waiting for the introduction Henry was about to pronounce.

"He is moon-struck, surely," thought the boy, "for I never saw him so before." When Godfrey's temper cooled for a moment, he began to think he had acted in a very foolish way. Having made up his mind to this opinion, he was about to turn back, and say something of the sort, when Henry's voice joining with his friends' in a peal of laughter, burst upon his

ear, and the idea, so natural to a sensitive mind, that they were laughing at him, prevented his putting his kindly resolution into practice. The nonfulfilment of a just or gentle action is always a source of lasting regret to a generous mind. Godfrey mourned to the last hour of his existence that he had so parted from Henry Peronett.

## CHAPTER XII.

### "LAST SCENE OF ALL!"

GODFREY PERONETT returned to the dwelling which Lady Isabel and Mrs. Peronett occupied in common, and, though he knew that the elder ladies were taking their usual drive, he framed an excuse which gained him ready admittance to Marian's presence. She was looking even more pale than when he had seen her in the morning, and her eyes were heavy with tears: he had been guided to this interview by the impetuosity of his feelings, which were beyond his control. Until he saw the chance, the possibility of Marian's bestowing her affection upon another, he was not at all aware of the hold she possessed upon his heart; and he resolved, with all the wildness of passion, to tell her that he loved—so as at once to ascertain the reason of her change of manner towards his cousin. All the tales he had ever

heard of the fickleness of woman crowded upon his imagination—he forgot altogether the comparative lack of those means which he had hitherto considered necessary for the support of rank and station—he forgot the foundling in the woman—he only remembered Marian, with all the attributes she really possessed, exaggerated by affection—the affection of a warm, an upright nature—refined, and glowing—yet, when aroused, both stormy and impetuous. Marian had no time to consider what his hurried and agitated manner portended; before she could speak he had seized her hand, and poured forth the story of his love: it gushed from his heart to his lips with all the eloquence and earnestness of truth.

"I have told you now, Marian, how I love you," he continued, "but I have still more to tell; I have to say that my fortunes are clouded, that my small patrimony is altogether insufficient to place you in the station which your worth and your beauty deserve; I must be the architect of my own fortunes, and as yet only the foundation-stone is laid: can you

climb the hill with me in retirement and labour, or could you have strength of mind to wait with your friend until my own exertions can place you upon its height?"

Marian knew not how to answer. She had never seen any man in her estimation to compare with him who knelt at her feet, who clasped her hand, whose eyes sought hers, with the intensity of an ardent, yet pure and holy passion; he had walked with her—talked with her—sung with her—read to her—her mind turned to him as to the perfection of all that was high-souled and excellent. She had heard his good qualities so frequently extolled by those she respected, that she never doubted the rightness of her judgment—she never dared to think that so exalted a being could regard her with affection; and, if a fond look or a tender expression made her heart beat and her cheek blush, she called to mind that Godfrey Peronett himself had attempted to plead the cause of another. Now, she could hardly trust her senses. Was it real?—was it true?—was it no dream?—the dove had indeed

found a spot of security, of safety, whereon to rest. In vain did Godfrey entreat her reply. The pure and untaught modesty of her mind forbade that she should speak the feelings which joy and hope and love sent bounding to her lips, and overpowered all others. She lost all memory of the past—all thought of the future. She only felt that Godfrey was her world—and that world was at her feet.

"Dearest, will you not answer me?" he repeated.

"Will you not let me think," she said at last, "and speak to Lady Isabel?"

"Yes, Marian, speak to her most certainly; you cannot finally have a wiser counsellor or firmer friend; but now, at this moment, I implore you, tell me how you feel towards me—have I no rival?"

"Rival! No. Who did you suppose—whom do you think of?"

"Henry Peronett; I certainly observed a change in your manner towards him. Why was it?"

In a moment Marian recalled the know-

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"You cross my path with Marian!" repeated Godfrey in a tone very unlike his natural one; *you*, indeed!—but, pray do not think it necessary to say anything on the subject; a

why should I doubt it then?—you'll tell me all the truth, sweet Marian."

"Not all just yet," she answered.

Her lover did not know exactly what to say to the frankness with which she avowed her intention of partial reserve, or to the reserve itself, which from her he little expected.

"And why not now and ever, dearest? I will be to you a friend, a brother, lover,—all in one; I know your history, and love you for yourself and that bright beauty, of which the world can show no parallel! Now, about Henry."

There was enough of the woman in Marian, young though she was, pressed down as she had been by the events of the past hours, —still was there enough of dear tormenting woman at her heart to make her feel a certain species of triumphant pleasure in witnessing Godfrey Peronett's extreme anxiety that she should not be interested for Henry. Say what we will about man's love for woman, it is too appropriating not to be selfish.

"Now, about Henry," he repeated.

"Well, Godfrey."

"I am sure, quite sure, that your regard for him is sisterly; but it will be as well to tell him so—it would be sad to give him pain."

"I would not give him pain for the world:" and this she said quite earnestly.

"Very kind of you—but why?—there is some mystery in this."

"There is," she said; and the little triumph that had given additional lustre to her beautiful eyes faded into an expression of saddened earnestness. "There is; but, Godfrey Peronett, alone as I am in the wide world, proud as I confess myself of what you have this morning told me, I could not be what you have said you wish me to be to you until this mystery is solved;—I am now the child of suspicion—I may prove the child of guilt;—if I do —ah, me! I should not be a fitting bride for one like you."

"My sweet one, be you what you may, you are yourself, and, being so—all dignity—all love—all goodness—I should have with you the richest, best, and noblest dower the world

can give—your own fair self, my dear one! Do I not know, that, being seen abroad, you now might choose where to bestow your hand, and yet you suffer me to take it thus, to press it to my lips, my heart, and call it mine for ever."

"But not yet, Godfrey, not yet: when I can clear away this mystery, or show it you to read—I fear," she added mournfully, "that may never be, for it concerns others more than it does me."

"Has Henry any share in it?"

"He has, although he knows it not; so, Godfrey—I do love to call you Godfrey, I could repeat it all day long—but still I must not yet—nay, pray let go my hand. I will tell you more, all I dare tell,—I am so glad to have you for a friend——"

"A lover, say a lover, dearest Marian."

"I must not say too many words," she replied, shaking her head till her bright glossy ringlets shaded her blushing cheeks, "lest I should say too much; I never spoke of love or lovers until now, not even to my nurse! School-

girls I've heard talk of what they called so, but it was not real, real pure love: to Lady Isabel I've talked, or rather she to me,—I could not be the first to speak of it myself; but," she added, turning from the sunny gaze of admiration which rested on her face, "I had much better say no more, or I may say too much."

"Speak on—speak ever," he exclaimed; and what more he might, could, or would have said, we cannot tell, for Mrs. Peronett's step sounded on the stair, and in another moment she opened the door. Nothing could exceed either Godfrey's or Marian's confusion. Lovers, when together, look awkward in all except each other's eyes, and they were no exception to the rule.

"Lady Isabel said you were to meet her at the library, Mr. Peronett," observed the lady in her coldest tone; "but perhaps you had forgotten your appointment?"

"No, Madam, I had not," he answered; "and if I had, I would but have pleaded my too fair excuse, and she would have forgiven me."

"I beg I may not interrupt you," she continued, with still more severity.

"You do not; I have said what I desired to say to Marian, and now have but to repeat it to Lady Isabel."

"May I be acquainted with the nature of your communication?" she added, pale with anger.

"Mrs. Peronett," said Godfrey, with much dignity of manner, "we are connected, but—not by friendship: you have been to me a harsh and ungenerous relative, turning the good to an evil purpose: I therefore must confess, that of all people, you are the last whom I would take into my confidence. Marian, will you not retire?" While he spoke he rang the bell. Perfectly aware of Mrs. Peronett's dislike to him, he was unwilling to leave Marian in such company at such a moment. The servant entered—"Miss Marian wishes her nurse to attend her in her own room," said Godfrey, finding a ready excuse: the footman bowed, and withdrew. "You look pale and agitated, Marian," he continued, taking her hand to lead her to the door.

"Godfrey Peronett!" exclaimed Mrs. Peronett, starting from the chair into which she had sunk, while her form and features denoted how perfectly unable she was to control her feelings. "Let go that hand!—Marian, I command you, let go the hand of that presumptuous person—do you hear me, girl?" she added, stamping her foot.

Marian thought *who it was that spoke*, and attempted to withdraw it, but it was too firmly grasped for that.

"By what right, Madam," inquired Godfrey, "do you presume to command this lady?"

"In the absence of Lady Isabel I will protect her from your insults," she said in bitter anger.

"My insults!" repeated Godfrey.

"He has not insulted me,—he would not, could not:—oh, Madam, you cannot mean it," sobbed Marian; while Katty, who, astonished at the footman's message, had hastened up stairs, and, hearing her young lady's voice uplifted in sorrow, opened the door and entered, her sleeves tucked up to the uttermost above

her bony elbows, her hands powdered from the arrowroot which she had been concocting into a pudding, or something of the sort in the kitchen.

"Miss Marian, darlint, is it sick you are, my jewel, or what ails you?—what have you been both doing to her that she looks like a ghost?"—and then, turning her piercing eyes upon Mrs. Peronett, she added pointedly, "I'm sure, my Lady, *you*, anyways, are the last in the world that ought to say a thing to hurt or harm her."

The words, though simple, were not simply spoken—if an arrow had entered that proud woman's heart, she could not have fallen more suddenly back upon the seat from which she had so lately risen, while Godfrey paused awhile to hear what might follow. Not so Marian; she threw herself upon her nurse's shoulder, and whispered, louder than she had intended, "Hush, hush, for the sake of mercy, —for my sake!" In an instant Mrs. Peronett recovered her self-possession; she rose, said something about fatigue and the heat of the

day, and, throwing open the window to admit the air, wished Godfrey a haughty good morning: he returned the salutation, and, having said a few words to Marian and her nurse, in too low a tone to meet Mrs. Peronett's ear, he quitted the apartment, signifying aloud his intention of returning with Lady Isabel.

"Come to your own room, alanna machree, with Katty, and lay down, my darlint, for you 're not able to stand! Och, my grief, if there isn't the print of my dirty white fingers on the sleeve of your bran new satinet!—is it satinet or satin-turky you call it, sweet one? —There, its easier brushed off than the print of the ould gintleman's black paw upon a body's heart, *or the stain off a lady's character.*"

"Let that young lady sit down here," commanded Mrs. Peronett, "and before you go I desire you to explain what it was you meant just now."

"About the satin is it, Madam?" replied the ready-witted nurse. "I've brushed the mark off, you see, my Lady, and it only occurred to

me to think that it would be a good thing for the world at large, and some people in particular, if they could get the mark of the black gintleman off themselves as asy."

"Psha, woman!" she exclaimed, endeavouring to conceal her agitation under the mask of a bold indifference;—"psha, you are in your dotage!"

"Thank ye for your opinion, my Lady," said the mortified Katty; "nobody axed you for it, so it was very good of you to give it. There are some things I doat on, and some I don't. Are you better now, ma vourneen? Come to your room with your ould nurse, my sweet young lady. She wasn't doating, any how, whin she looked first into your soft, sweet, innocent face, my babby-bawn!—*whin those that had no natur in them left you to starve! God punish all unnatural mothers, say I!*"

Mrs. Peronett trembled in every limb, but she did not trust herself to speak farther than to desire, in a tone which neither felt inclined to dispute, that Marian would remain where she was.

"I tould you before, only last night, Miss Marian, to keep asy, to stay quiet, and not bother this lady, or any one else, about—yourself knows what; but one or two things and one or two thoughts have changed my mind: speak out, ma vourneen, if you feel inclined, and the Almighty God, who gave you grace and strength to bear your trials, and who of his marcy and goodness took you out of the trouble and raised friends to you,—friends where no friends could be expected, for they are apter to spring out of the hot-beds of prosperity than out of the wildernesses of adversity, as a body may say,—that good God will support you, and maybe turn her heart to the truth and the justice at last; she has the sin to bear up against, while you, ma vourneen, have only the sorrow! Go to that lady," continued the faithful creature, who had so ably performed the duties of her adoption to her adopted, and now was so powerfully affected that she could hardly find words to utter her advice,—"*Go to that lady, and ask her to receive her child!*"

Mrs. Peronett attempted to rise, to speak, but she could do neither—her tongue refused to utter a single word, her limbs to move. Katty Macane, almost needing support herself, supported Marian to her mother's side; it was a time of intense suffering to them all. The nurse spoke—

"Don't attempt for to deny it, Madam, but raythe, on your bended knees to Almighty God, bend your proud heart, and thank and bless Him for such a child—a child that His bounty, and not your worthiness, can claim.—You shan't fall at her feet!" exclaimed the Nurse, as Marian attempted to do so. "If she does not take you to her heart, leave her in her proud loneliness, to die as she has lived—you shall not fall at her feet. She was the means to bring you into the world, to be sure; she could not help that—but what did she then?—she deserted her colours—abandoned her child! Look at this purse," she continued, drawing it from her bosom: "do you remember the night when, pursued by the watchman, you flung this at his feet, as a housebreaker flings

poisoned meat to a hungry dog? May the Lord forgive ye——"

"Stop, Nurse—stop!" exclaimed Marian, terrified at the ghastly expression of Mrs. Peronett's countenance, as she clenched her hands and gasped for breath. "Stop, you will murder *my mother!*"

The unhappy woman's heart yearned towards the outcast child. She had long secretly acknowledged her claim, though she had lacked the courage to make the disclosure, even to her daughter. She would have given worlds to have achieved the strength necessary for a firm and positive denial; but Katty's appeal had burst so unexpectedly upon her, that she had no power given to commit farther sin by persisting in such foul injustice. Her heart yearned strongly towards Marian; she opened her arms, and the foundling felt the rapid beatings of that heart against her own.

"Praised be God!" exclaimed the Nurse, "SHE 'S OWNED!—It isn't, to be sure, the mother I'd have chosen for her, but we can't alter it now, nor have everything our own

way. I wish you joy, Madam, of your daughter!" she said, when she had, after a great many ineffectual efforts, succeeded in drying her eyes. "I wish you joy of your daughter. And y'er a fine lady, and a handsome lady still; but I can't help wishing also, from the bottom of my heart, that you desarved her better. Show her the picture, Miss Marian. I made sure of having her called Marian too, so you may thank me for that."

"For more, far more than that," said Mrs. Peronett mournfully; "though I have seemed ungrateful—thoughtless of your goodness to my child—yet—but, Marian, my poor girl, I did not totally forget you; from time to time I forwarded money, more than enough, to Mrs. Jones. You were not dependent upon her bounty, as you supposed. Oh no! I was not so completely lost to all feeling as to suffer that. She knew not from whence it came, but she received it, and I have her acknowledgments."

"God forgive her!" said the Nurse: "that was what she must have meant when she told

you, Miss Marian, how bitter sorry she was for her double dealing. I suppose she wanted money for some finery (women does a dale of sin for that same finery), and reconciled it to her conscience somehow—it's easy quieted sometimes, and more times it is troublesome—the voice of the Almighty, within us all."

"Send her away," whispered Mrs. Peronett, while she gazed upon the miniature Marian had given her: "I wish to speak with you alone."

"Leave us, dear Nurse! My own beloved friend, whose love and faithfulness I never can repay," she said, kissing her cheek. "You must teach me how to be more grateful to her, Madam," she added, turning to Mrs. Peronett, while Katty, having gained her object, withdrew, her heart running over at her eyes, and murmuring "SHE'S OWNED!"

"You will not scorn your mother, Marian, I hope you will not scorn me. Having once understood the dignity and bearing of your noble nature, I would have told you what your nurse discovered, but for the dread of

scorn; and now you, and you only, can compel that woman's silence. We will buy it, Marian; —send her far away."

"Send her far away!" repeated Marian, stung to the heart by the thought of so much selfish feeling. "Send my nurse, who supported me in misery, loved me in sorrow, clung to me all her life,—send her away!—you cannot be in earnest, Madam! And as to buying her silence, nothing about her can be purchased—no; I have but to request it, and tortures would not force a sentence from her that she thought would give me pain! I bless the Almighty that I have found my mother, but I do not wish to declare it unless at your own express desire."

A haughty flush of pride rose to the lady's cheek—she saw the seeds of her own temper ready to shoot forth, she did not know how strongly; and, daring as she was under her present depressing circumstances, she could not bring herself to the level of that child who stood in all the dignity of unspotted innocence before her.

"You call me Madam," she said; "you do not speak to me kindly, as children do to their mothers—your eyes have something stern, and chill, and cold, in their expression when they meet mine—there is a something in your air and manner that forbids affection—why is this? But why should I inquire? By my sick bed you were all tenderness and love, you did not look upon me thus. Think you that I have nothing suffered? nothing endured? I have been well and sorely punished. I never could look upon your father's picture without fancying it frowned upon me in the bitterest wrath."

Marian paled and trembled: that Mrs. Peronett should even name her father, unless urged to do so, was what she never had anticipated. She could not comprehend it. Her mother continued—

"If he had lived, he would have been most proud of you."

"Proud of me!" repeated the indignant girl. "I pray you, mother, spare me; I never wish to hear of *him*."

"And why not?—poor foolish girl! Listen, and look not, on your life, so cold and stern, or you will drive me mad! How I believed you comfortable and happy I can prove; but when I found you under Lady Isabel's protection, discovered who you were, seized the clew, investigated the entire story, knew you as my child, I devised a plan to do you perfect justice. I told Lady Isabel my project; she could not imagine the reason, and I cannot help in my own soul accusing her of forwarding Godfrey's love for you, which till to-day I only suspected, although I told her that I wished your whole soul should twine round Henry, and more, that, if it did not, she would repent it to her dying day. See you not what I mean? It was the way to do you more than justice: *you, being a female, as the property was settled, never could have enjoyed it; but, marrying him* (which the General cannot prevent), *it would be all your own.*"

Marian, perplexed to the uttermost, knew not what to say; her senses became confused, and she could only faintly inquire—

"Marrying who—Godfrey?"

"I'd see you dead sooner than see you wed to Godfrey," exclaimed Mrs. Peronett bitterly. "Never think of it. What can you know of preference or love? You must not think of him,—you shall not,—it would kill me. He never looks at me of late but with suspicion—I think it so. Were HE to know of this, he would triumph in my exposure! Think not his fancy for you would save me—no, nor you;—he would delight in your downfall, because you are my child. Know you not that on my husband's death he was the next heir male, if I had not a son: his mother, I tell you, exulted like a fiend over a fallen soul, when, after two years' marriage, I had no child—insulted me too by what was worse, her pity!—the pity of a younger brother's wife—think of that! I hated her. She was so proud of her fine heir, she 'd show him off before me! And when the Peronett estates were added to the former property, and we took the name, she 'd call her son the little baronet—repeat the

words 'Sir Godfrey!' in her puling voice, then lisp anew her weak commiseration. My husband died!—as I had promise of a family—he died, but full of hope that I should give an heir to the estate; *it was the last prayer that lingered on his dying lips.* I was a widow! alone with those the law calls relatives, whose law is never love; and then my sister-in-law came first with her condolence at my loss—I knew she could have danced upon my husband's grave—and then congratulations on my situation—the little pale-faced hypocrite! Condolence quickly followed them. She eyed my gait, my figure! Was *afraid—afraid* indeed!—the child would be a girl. A playfellow and wife for HER Sir Godfrey!—*her* Sir Godfrey!—think of that! I could have ground them both to dust. I wept and prayed both night and day that I might bear a son. My travail came—I ground my teeth in the great agony that only mothers know. I never murmured, but to myself still I prayed that I might have a boy; yet I provided for the other

chance; arranged and planned the whole, but still prayed on, not that the will of God, but mine, be done.

"The child was born—I dared not ask the question—the nurse crept to my side—I looked but in her eyes, and read the truth—YOU WERE THAT CHILD."

Marian screamed—she fell on her knees before her mother. She grasped her hands in hers, and kissed them with devotion. She wept—she sobbed—she struggled hard for words; then, laying her head in her lap, she said,

"Bless you, bless you, my dear mother, my sweet mother, mother!—my own mother!—bless you!—I am, you say I am, no base-born girl. Say it again,—*You were that child.*"

"Who dared to say that you were base-born?" replied Mrs. Peronett, pushing the clustering hair from her child's brow, on which she looked as on a mirror where all things noble are portrayed. "Who DARED to cast so foul an imputation upon ME? Base-born! You were indeed that child, whom I exchanged,

to gratify, as I would think, my husband's dying wish; but much I fear it was my own ambition."

"I see, I see," interrupted Marian, alive at the time to only one feeling; "I see it all,—you changed me for a boy, for Henry, who is not my brother,—I see it now: bless you, mother! I can love you now. I am the child of honourable parents,—had a right brave father, my dear kind nurse's friend and master. I have had his gauntlets on these hands. I have been saved and cherished by that faithful woman, who would have served him to the death—how fortunate I have been! How wide God's mercy is! My own mother!—my honest mother!—your sin was of ambitious prompting, not the vile crime, which—but I said it could not be. It was hard of you to leave me, though!" she added, looking mournfully in her mother's face. "Were you not sorry for me—me, your own, your only one?—It was hard to leave me to the trouble I have had, and must have sunk under, but for that humble friend whom I think you said you

would banish; but I am sure you did not mean it; you said it but to try my heart, to see if it were sound, to feel my pulse, to learn if I were healthy."

"Marian," said the ambitious woman, after she had shed a few of those natural tears which but seldom rose to her eyes,—"Marian, small things must be sacrificed to attain great ends. My hatred of that Godfrey is as powerful as when I first resolved to sacrifice my own child to crush the presumption he imbibed at his mother's breast."

Strange, is it not? how blind we are to our own failings! Had Mrs. Peronett an idea that Marian was not in possession of the last evil she had perpetrated, that of purchasing from a woman as heartless as herself a boy to pass as hers, it is doubtful whether she would at once have confessed the whole, or planned how she could longer continue the fraud. Now, her mind was directed *solely* to her favourite object of silencing the conscience that so perpetually reproached her with the desertion of her child, and, if possible, a still

stronger feeling urging her on to save her reputation. What would the world say were this known? How could she endure the sarcasms of the General, or the triumph which, judging of others by herself, she imagined would flash from the Peronett eyes of Godfrey Peronett. Alas! she herself was far more proud, far more presumptuous, than Godfrey or his gentle mother had ever been. Totally disregarding Marian's protestations that Henry Peronett was the youth of all others whom she could the least regard with affection, did she deliberately attempt, even after the strong excitement they had both undergone (and which she sought to turn to her own purpose), to twist and twine the holy and upright affection with which her own child's heart was overflowing towards her, to the carrying on of the fraud which she had so long supported. Cunning at reading hearts, she threw herself upon her daughter's generosity. She knew it was one of the strongest holds she could possess. Would *she* expose her? Then, suddenly assuming that terrific sternness and decision

of manner which had so frequently awed those into subjection who dared dispute her will, she swore that, if her deception were made known, even to Lady Isabel, she would destroy herself. The genial current of Marian's affections, that had flowed so warmly, congealed around her heart. She thought of Godfrey, of his love, of the sweet world of happiness which his avowal had created like fairy-land, only like fairy-land to vanish. She recalled the ecstasy that swelled her heart to bursting at finding herself the lawful child of a man whose deeds of bravery were worthy of record in the annals of his country. She had within an hour achieved the darling wish of her heart —her mother was before her, unspotted, as the world calls women who, let them commit what crime they may, preserve their chastity.

And yet that mother was labouring to draw her into a plot, a fraud against the man she loved with all the warm, the overwhelming enthusiasm of a first affection. The struggle was too much for her to bear. The mother who should have shielded her from trouble,

selfish and ambitious to the last, refused her time even to deliberate. She worked upon her generous nature, until the poor girl's brain whirled round, as in a fever of delirium. So much was crowded in a little space, that she felt as if ages had been added to her years; but there was more to come on that eventful day before its course was run.

It will be remembered that, when Henry Peronett parted from Godfrey on the cliffs at Hastings, he was joined by two young Oxonians, comrades and friends. Lady Isabel Gascoigne returned home at the appointed time, but could receive no explanation of Marian, whom she found in Mrs. Peronett's room in a state of agitation which it would be impossible to describe. Katty had received no further information, and, continuing in her original belief that Henry and Marian were brother and sister, would give no answer to her inquiries. Lady Isabel concluding that something painful had occurred respecting Godfrey, resolved to speak fully and frankly to Mrs. Peronett on the subject, and had sig-

nified her intention of doing so, when they were apprized of an occurrence which is remembered to this day in the neighbourhood of Hastings as one of those melancholy dispensations where the hand of Almighty power is seen outstretched,—but *not* to succour, nor to save.

Three young men had engaged a pleasure-boat at the pier, and, considering themselves perfectly qualified to manage it, as well on the sea as on the river, had refused the sailor's aid, and put out alone, with no other companions than joy and laughter. There was neither storm nor cloud; yet the boat went down in the clear blue waters. Two of the youths were the scions of a noble house, the third was the young man so long known in these pages as Henry Peronett. The evening tide brought ashore the corpse of him who had left it only a few brief hours before in the pride of health and strength, and the warm flush of happiness and hope. No wonder that Godfrey Peronett remembered to his dying day the parting with that light-hearted boy, and bitterly reproached himself for the sharp words,

which nothing but the jealousy of love could have drawn from him.

The same night, when Marian's tortured spirits had at last found rest in sleep, Mrs. Peronett, with that decision of character which, with a well-conditioned mind, would have rendered her a good, as well as a remarkable woman, disappeared from her house—leaving on her daughter's pillow the following letter:—

"I had thought to have amended the wrong I did you—I cannot—there is a Power superior to mine which wills it otherwise. You have known your mother but to lose her—one day, hardly one day, and she is gone for ever; you will not feel her loss. It would be madness in *me* now to attempt to produce coldness between you and Godfrey,—if I mistake him not, sudden prosperity will change him towards you—I could almost hope so, for I cannot desire to see him happy. Fate has been against me, and has conquered. I will not remain in England to be pointed at as the projector of a *fruitless* fraud, to be triumphed over by Godfrey, to be abused by the General!

If you, my child, after what has passed, can love me, I think it would contribute to my happiness—but I will have no pity from *you* or *any* one—no pity. I felt for you what I never thought I could feel for any living thing, and almost believe there must be something in that sympathy which is so often prated of, but so seldom visible, at least to such unbelievers as your mother. My heart is chilled and miserable. That poor boy, cut off in the prime of youth! I wish this matter could be kept secret; but then suspicion would still cloud your days, and even as a daughter your portion will diminish the wealth of *Sir Godfrey Peronett!* He will never marry you, he hates me too much—this is some consolation. I leave the proofs of your birth, of your identity, *of my own fraud*, upon your table,—I owe you so much justice. They are such as will convince the most doubting—satisfy the most suspicious; and deprive the proud old general of all excuse for disavowing that you are the true and legitimate daughter of his son: he will now find ready reasons for complimenting

his discernment when he spoke of your natural dignity and expressive eyes. It is more than probable that I leave England for ever. My child! I do not deserve you. How the old General will rave when he finds he has been duped by a woman! I am glad of that —*his pride deserved a fall.* I am sure my absence will be a relief to you. I need not charge Lady Isabel to be your friend: she will love you more than ever. I have looked at you asleep,—you are like your father when you sleep,—and I have cut a tress of your black hair. My child, farewell! I will not have your pity, I cannot have your love:—then what am I? Alas! a childless mother, with a good, a lovely, and unspotted child! Heaven bless you! I think I should have liked to hear your voice again, but it might reproach me. I have looked, too, on that boy, and the icy feel of death crept into my own veins. At least I did him no wrong: he has died ignorant of the cheat of which he was the unconscious instrument; and now it is needless to explain the circumstances under which it was effected.

You, at least, are righted—if further proofs be asked for, I shall not be too far away to supply them. If I were sure that death was oblivion, I should soon be far happier than I am. I will write you from abroad, and then, if you desire it, you can answer me. Farewell, my child, my only child! farewell!

"M. PERONETT."

The letter was directed to Miss Peronett—when Marian saw the direction, she could hardly believe it was intended for her.

## A POSTSCRIPT IN A LETTER

### From Mrs. Katty Macane to her "People" in Ireland.

"My dear Cousin Betty,

"Indeed it's so long since you've seen the scratch of a pen from me or mine, that I'm thinking you'll hardly know it now; but, my dear Betty, there's something mighty pleasant in writing to one's people when one's prosperous, as I may say I am at present, thanks be to God for the same!

"My dear Betty,—I understand that the son of a man, Paddy Charley by name, wrote a long letter to a young woman he was keeping company with for ever so long, whin she was over here, but now lives near you with a lord's family—telling a sort of history; showing the strange things which happen in London, and which less knowledgeable people than myself

don't believe; thinking, I suppose, that disbelief makes them all seem fine strong-minded people, setting up for wisdom without an idea in their head to work out a wonder, or to make one, *or anything else*—indeed there's many such in the world, who, just whin they happen to hear tell of a thing they never heard tell of before, think, because of *that*, it can't be possible. I only wish such people would tell me how the stars are hung in the sky, or the comets (God save us!) whirled through the air! Sure it's a world of wonders, from the upshooting of a grain of mustard-seed to the turning of the earth or the blazing of the sun; and there are plenty of things happening every day a dale more wonderful than any that the writing people ever put into a book.

"Well, he wrote of a young maid's fortunes, and all the odds and ends and ups and downs that came to me respecting her— who, God be praised! now is an acknowledged gentlewoman, with feathers in her head, kissing the hand of the virtuous Queen Adelaide, the

king's wife, and the Duke himself to the fore, and myself at the palace, outside of it—and could see the curtain-hangings, and the ladies' plumes!—think of that, Betty; that's as wonderful as the story you heard about when we war at Hastings, where the cliffs are never so bould, nor the waves as high, as they are in poor Ireland.

"Well, Mrs. Peronett, the born mother of Miss Marian, left us there, without so much as by ye'r lave or with ye'r lave—left her own child, that (and I take no small pride out of it) she found a ready-made beauty of a lady, and away with her to furrin parts, which she's most fit for on account of the shame—for, God help us! she had a crooked way with her (her mind, I mean) which the nobility gets sometimes, and didn't see much harm in doing a wrong turn, unless it was found out, and then she hadn't courage to stand to the fight, which proved to me, for all her high looks, that she was a great coward. Well, she left all right as to the proofs—and the ould Gineral came himself, in such a hurry (you

heard all about the Gineral, a mighty nice, clean, neat, particular, little, ould gentleman), and the Dean, Lord Augustus Bingham, the Almighty bless and purtect him!—it bates the brightest sunshine just to look in his face: the glory of the heavens is stampt upon it! and the poor innocent desaver, the bould frank-hearted boy! poor fellow! was buried; and many a warm tear dropt on his coffin too,—for sure Masther Henry, you knew nothing, God help you! what happened—but was like an instrument of music, to obey the hand that called the notes. Well, he was buried; and then the ould Gineral, after a tareing passion, and declaring it was all an imposition, and refusing to believe what was plain to everybody in the world, and made every one convinced—how his daughter-in-law's ambition to have a son made her abandon her own born baby!—(*that's* the most wonderful thing of all)—and put a boy in its place! Well, he would not be convinced; and Miss Marian took one of her turns at the pride, which is as natural to her as if she was brought up a queen—and

tould the ould Gineral she didn't care about his money, in a lady-like way; flashing on him like a sunbeam: and then, all of a sudden, he discovered that my darlint, Miss Marian, had the Peronett eye, and said (poor foolish ould gintleman—though, Betty, he's a *rale* gintleman) that his dog, Hafiz, knew all along she was of gentle blood; and took *us*, Miss Marian and me, to live at the Rosery, a mighty purty priggish place entirely—and nothing right but as Miss Marian did it—only he couldn't abide that her mother's name should ever be mentioned before him—and then, after a bit, and a dale of purswashun from Miss Marian, for a rason she had, he made up a tiff he had with the best and handsomest young gentleman in England, his own nephew, and a grate lawyer—that would have been a judge or lord chancellor at the least—and then he settled that they war to be married, which, to be sure, *they* had settled before, so it was all right—and wasn't there a wedding?—and to think of *her* preferring me above them all to dress her, turning out a frind's maid

that she has as a supernumary, on account of the fashion and the grandeur—only makes no use of her, but for state like: and says in her own sweet voice, says she, 'Nurse, dear, you dressed me for my christ'ning,' says she, 'and no other shall dress me for my wedding.' It would have done your heart good to see how the Frinch woman looked; and I was glad of it, for I hate the Frinch—many a time the DUKE and I gave 'em a bateing—but I was more glad and proud whin I saw her enter the carriage with Lady Isabel and two bride's-maids, and all the grandees, the Gineral striving to keep the thin hard muscles of his face asy, thinking, no doubt, of his noble son, whom I sarved under so long: and I, dressed in a grass-green Irish tabinet, a presint from the Gineral Sir Henry Peronett, Baron knight, and a thread-lace cap and collar, with a white satin bow as big as a cawliflower —and Lady Isabel, her own self, says to me in the hall, foreninst all the footmen, and Dr. Darling's footman to the fore, who minded me well, for it's many a lie he tould me of the

Doctor being out whin I knew he was in—thinking I was what they call here a pawper, a sort of visiter nobody's ever at home to: a pawper, Betty, is one who asks for something he can't get—sometimes it's a morsel of bread to save him from starving, and then he's called the 'dregs of the people;' sometimes it's a situation in a high place, and then he's called 'an ambitious gentleman;'—there's a dale of differ in pawpers. Well, says Miss Marian, says she, 'You must go in the same carriage with us,' says she—mind *that*, Betty, and let the priest and the parish know it; one likes to be respectable in one's own place—and so I did, and the darlint lady put her hand in mine, and, says she, 'You, dear Nurse, watched over me and saved me, and you must do so still;' but she could say no more, for her heart was full, brimfull of joy, and remembrance, and one thing or another; and then, to be sure, whin the bridegroom handed her up to the altar, every one said they had never seen so handsome a pair—but that wasn't all! What do you think? there

was a wedding breakfast, such as you never saw, nor never can expect to see,—how should you! Such sights of shampain! such loads of company! and I thought the sight would leave my eyes whin I heard them say THE DUKE himself had come—but whin Misther Godfrey had himself called me up to his Grace, from among the crowd that was waiting in the hall, to get just a glimpse of his conquering face, I could not stand, but fell on my knees before him and kissed his hand; and then they tould me aftherwards—for I had'nt the sense to remember anything I heard, I could only tell what I felt—how Mr. Godfrey informed his Grace that to me he owed the blessing of his bride, and how I tould my beads before his picture (that was Misther Godfrey's fun you know); and then the Duke raised me up, and said he was proud that I was a soldier's wife, and took a glass of shampain with me himself. And that foolish little book-making ould lady, Lady Bab, came, looking none the better for the years gone over her head, and wanted me to dance an

Irish jig, and asked me to tache her Irish, and thin began talking to his Grace about her books: I'm sure it would have been better manners to let them spake for themselves, which in coorse they would whinever they were opened. I slunk away thin, for my heart was too full to stand it. If I was to go on with the glories of that, the happiest day of my life, I should never have done; but, grand as it was, there is something more sweet to the heart, Betty, in the goodness of that beautiful young lady and her husband. God bless her! when she was a daushy craythur she was mighty fond of having a will and a way of her own; and afther, whin under hardship, why she was as lofty as a queen; but whin prosperity came to her, my dear, she softened like a lamb: now that she is in her own proper station she bends like a willow by a strame to all below her. Think of her finding out the poor skinny ould teacher, a Miss Kitty, that used to help to bother her at Miss Womble's school, and settling a pinsion on her, and having her to tea; and tracing a mad

school-girl, Tom Kemp they used to call her—making out that she was, God help her! in a place where no fine lady would touch her with a pair of tongs, yet taking her from sin and shame, and placing her where, plaze God! she may be saved.

"Oh, Betty! it's a blessed thing whin the grandeur of the earth stoops to usefulness, and Beauty and Vartue delight in walking together in the footpaths of life, strengthening the weak, and attending to the wants of the needy. His Reverence Lord Augustus Bingham is another miracle of goodness;—'twas he married 'em, who but he? and wasn't he the proud man that day? and *he* has kept me going lately a great deal, looking up a poor sickly deranged gentleman, who wrote books, poetry, and something, and took the *head sickness* on account of trouble: but myself and his lady have brought him round, and he's turning to the books again.—Sorra's in 'em for books! They're a great bother; and I can't think how any one would write them if they could do without it, which I am sure he

could, having full and plenty of everything, and the regard of the best people upon earth —and Doctor Darling to sweeten him up; and first and last, even now, though he's white-headed, he's the sweetest spoken gintleman that ever touched a lady's pulse—God bless him, wherever he goes, and send him plenty of sickness!—patients, I mean. I am growing ould, and raythur stiff, and I tould Doctor Darling so; and he laughed, and said they were only *growing* pains—growing pains indeed, the smiling desaver!—But all I do is to walk about the house and see that the mancook puts no Frinch *pisen* into the jellies, and soups, and things.

"Paddy Charley is altogether past his labour, and his son has just petitioned the boord, as his father did before him, to be removed from Hans Place, which is the same as ever, the stupidest place in all London.

"I don't think of any more to tell you just now. I have sent his Reverence Father Dacey, with grateful duty, a new vestment; and hope he will remember a prayer, whin-

ever he has time, for my poor husband, Serjeant Macane: rest his soul, I pray, Amen!—and a thrifle for ye'rself, beside the present to keep you in snuff, and me in remimbrance:—may be you'd have thought oftner of me if I had sent you nothing, for *then* you'd have been expecting still. I am a grand woman, Betty, and carry my head as high as I plase, with no one to fault it: but I see the mercy and goodness of GOD through it all; and even now I hear that dear lady's blessed voice singing His praise, for Lady Isabel, and the Dean, and the nate little ould Gineral, and all, are below; and it is a holy Sabbath evening; and by'n by, before she goes to her dressing-room, she will come and sit on a low stool at my feet, and put her beautiful head on my lap, as she used when a child, and talk over her past sorrows, and, maybe, of her mother; and then she will say how happy she is, and put me in mind of the time whin, though all was dark around, I used to tell her there was *a silver lining to every cloud.*"

Katty Macane's letter contained much more gossipry. But, finding Marian so happy, it is better to leave her before the cloud turn: though, as the young maid's sorrows were severe, it is only natural to suppose that her after-days will be long and happy!

> "I did not err; there does a sable cloud
> Turn forth her silver lining on the night."

THE END.

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